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THE Liguorian

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR LOVERS OF GOOD READING



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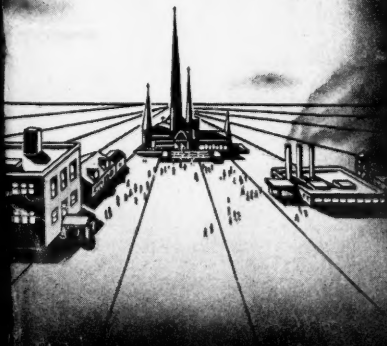
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Amongst Ourselves

We of THE LIGUORIAN are firm believers in the principles of freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, freedom of worship, that are rightly said to be essential elements in the spirit of true democracy. But we are aware that there is a difference between the reasons for our constant defense of these freedoms and those of many Americans who loudly boast of their devotion to the same. Many of these latter champion freedom of conscience, thought and worship on the ground that nobody can reach a certain knowledge of truth, especially in religious matters; indeed, that there is no such thing as certain and objective truth in these matters. Therefore they hold that every individual should be permitted to hold and express whatever he likes as the truth, because nobody can know what the truth really is. We, on the contrary, believe in freedom of conscience, opinion and worship, because we believe in the sacredness of the individual person and the inviolability of his right to chart his own course through life. But we also believe that the person who, on the one hand, has the right to freedom of conscience, thought and worship, has on the other hand the obligation to try to attain to the absolute and unchangeable truths that should rule his conscience, his mind and his worship. We know that there is such absolute and unchangeable truth. In short, then, we defend freedom of conscience, thought and worship because we

know that no one can or should be forced to think or believe or act contrary to his own free will and choice; but we also hold that every human being has an obligation to be submissive to the force of truth itself to shape his conscience, his thoughts and his actions.

Whatever THE LIGUORIAN presents to its readers and it is noted for presenting clear and decisive conclusions, is offered only in the light of the evidence for the truth that supports it. We have absolutely no interest in external force of any kind as a means of making somebody think or believe or act in a certain way. We believe that all changes in human beings must be initiated within themselves: through the normal, efficacious operation of their own mind and will aided by the grace of God. In the process of aiding people to reach conviction and submission to truth, the presentation of evidence is of supreme importance, together with the constant repetition of the encouraging fact that the truth can be known by all men of good will. We reject constantly, wholeheartedly, vigorously, the false principle that nobody can be sure of what is true in religious matters, and that this is the only reason for freedom of conscience, thought and worship. The Liguorian will always say to its readers: You can know the truth; here is the evidence for it; study the evidence; embrace the truth, and the truth will make you free.

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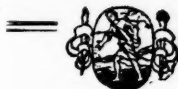
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THE Liguorian

March, 1953

a magazine for the lovers of good reading



Devoted to the Unchangeable Principles of Truth, Justice, Democracy and Religion, and to All That Brings Happiness to Human Beings

How to Get the Most Out of Lent

To get anything at all out of Lent, one must know how it fits into God's plan for every human life. To get the most out of it, one must ponder seriously all the following truths.

D. F. Miller

YOU CAN hardly escape reminders of the coming of Lent if you are at all aware of what is going on around you. It is announced in church and prepared for by three Sundays on which violet vestments are used and preliminary urgings to penance given by word and symbol. It is pointed out clearly on any Catholic calendar you may happen to have in your home. Even the secular newspapers give you reminders of it by beginning to publish menus for Lenten fare on the woman's page.

So the coming of Lent breaks in on your consciousness in some way. But perhaps your reaction is not exactly what it should be. You may think of it briefly as an unimportant yearly observance, or as an unpleasant necessity, to be accepted with little grace and a grudging compliance with what is commanded or recommended during Lent.

Such an attitude is both short-sighted and self-destructive. It is an attitude based on feelings, which can always be counted on to raise arguments for resistance to anything that may cross them in any way.

If you think of yourself as a mature human being, you resent being called

a creature of feeling alone, and must resent the attempt of your feelings to dictate your whole attitude toward Lent. For when Lent is rightly analyzed by the mind, it can be seen to have tremendous importance for the welfare of every Christian whose life it is designed to influence.

The right attitude toward Lent is made up of a number of convictions that reach far beyond the question of whether or not to do penance. It is bound up with the whole purpose of life, with all the teachings of Christ, and with the answers to the most important questions anyone is ever inclined to ask about himself.

The convictions that hold the explanation of Lent and lead to its proper observance may be set down as three in number, each one bringing to mind a long chain of inter-related truths.

1.

The first conviction that gives meaning to Lent may be worded as follows by each individual.

The first and most important single objective of my whole life must be to attain to an intimate, personal union with God.

This is what all men were made for. This is what gives meaning and fullness to human life. If it is not known, or if it is forgotten, or if a person deliberately ignores it, then nothing will save him from misery, failure and despair.

Attaining to this state of union with God must follow a certain pattern of indispensable steps, none of which can be by-passed or neglected.

The first step is *knowledge of God*. Obviously it is foolish to think about attaining to union with God if one does not know Him, and all the important things about Him that He Himself has revealed. It is equally unintelligent to say that we cannot know anything certain about God and therefore should not aspire to any personal union with Him. Both through the visible things of creation we can know Him, and through the manifestation of Himself and His will in the incarnation.

The second step is the *remembrance of God*. Many things we come to know and then to forget and think little about from day to day. It must not be so with the knowledge of God, on which so much depends. Having come to know Him, we must train ourselves to think of Him often, at regular intervals, above all at times of stress in our lives.

The third step is the *desiring of union with God*. It is possible to know a great deal about God in a theoretical way, and even to think about Him quite often in the course of each day, without ever stimulating the will to aspire to actual personal union with God. The stimulus to the will is desire. Even when we know God as the sum of all that is good and desirable, we do not spontaneously desire Him because we do not *see* Him as the sum of all goodness. The desire of union with

God must therefore be cultivated.

The fourth step is *submitting to God's clearly made known will* as to how union with Him is attained. The failure to recognize the importance of this step makes for all the heresies and all the fanaticism and all the religious individualism and contradictions in the world. Solid religious thinking and living can have no other starting point than in open-minded submissiveness to anything that God may ask. It begins with the question of Saul, before he became St. Paul: "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Anybody who begins his religious journey with the statement, "I shall find out by myself how best to be united to God," will end up in a tangle of confusion and self-deception.

Following through these four steps leads inevitably to the realization that the one means through which God wants every human being to be united to Him is sanctifying grace. This grace, explained and merited for all by Christ, makes one a child of God, a sharer in God's nature, a creature elevated to a state of special likeness to and intimacy with His Creator.

Christ, the Son of God, has set up special means through which the soul of man attains to sanctifying grace, called the sacraments. These external forms or actions spontaneously produce the effect of grace in the soul. But they by no means release anyone (except children without the use of reason) from the necessity of cultivating a conscious union with God. In fact, prayer and desire and love and conscious submission to God are necessary dispositions both for not impeding the grace that flows from the sacraments, and for rendering it effective and practical once it is received.

To summarize this conviction, then, we remind ourselves that each of us

has been created to know God, to remember Him, to desire Him, to be united with Him by the grace His Son merited for us all by His passion and death. We must dispose ourselves for both the reception and use of this grace that comes from the sacraments by the earnest use of both mind and will in relation to God.

There are grades or degrees of union with God, according to the measure in which individuals choose to increase grace in their souls and to act upon it. The objective of each sincere Christian must be to increase grace in his soul until he can say like St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." The crown of such living is the beatific vision of God in heaven and everlasting rapturous companionship with Him.

2.

The second conviction that must enter into one's thinking about the meaning of Lent may be phrased by each Christian as follows:

There are many obstacles in the way of my attaining to union with God by ever increasing grace, which is the great purpose I am to fulfill in life.

All the obstacles have their starting point in original sin. The effect of original sin in all to whom it has been transmitted may be described simply as the tendency to choose a forbidden apple, as Adam and Eve did, in preference to God. The implication in such a choice always is that it will make one like to God, because one will thus have cast off all obligation to a higher being than himself.

The apple is the symbol of all the things in the world that manage in one way or another to become obstacles to a person's union with God.

Sometimes it is the *forbidden* apple that turns a person away from union with God. Just as in the original

Eden, so today God surrounds His creatures on earth with an abundance of good things, on only some of which he places a sign: "Don't touch, under pain of complete separation from Me." All kinds of food and drink are at hand, but God says: "Don't get drunk." All kinds of happy associations with other human beings, but God says: "Don't hate or hurt anybody." Ample pleasures even of the body for the married, but God says: "Don't take them out of marriage, and don't turn them away from their purpose in marriage, under pain of separation from Me."

There are always some who, not satisfied with all the good things they can have in life with God, insist on taking the forbidden things and losing God. They insist on the drunkenness, or the hatred, or the impurity or birth-control. They are embittered that God should have forbidden anything, and the devil helps along with the silly suggestion that if they take the forbidden thing they will be like to God. Anyway, the temptation is always at hand; there is always one forbidden tree and one forbidden apple within reach that can deprive a soul of union with God.

But it is not always the forbidden fruit that separates a soul from God. Sometimes it is just too much fruit, too many indulgences of "innocent" but material things. Too much concern for making money, for eating and drinking, for "getting ahead in the world," for having a good time, for making a kind of heaven out of this world. Thus God is lost not necessarily at first by a direct act of rebellion against Him, but by a process of exclusion; there is no room for Him in the inn of one's mind and heart. Inevitably the process of excluding God from one's interests leads to rebellion against Him too. Inevitably, too, this

process leads to a sense of futility, emptiness, disappointment, disillusionment, despair. This is the heart of the problem that every human being must face and solve, or evade and be broken on: to hold fast to God while using the world wisely, or to let go of God and pin all his hopes of happiness on the world.

The problem is compounded by the example and influence of hundreds in the present world who have already chosen the apple in preference to God. Some of them are intellectuals who actually want to be like unto God. Some of them are sensualists, who feel that cultivating their bodily instincts alone can bring them everything they desire. Some are dupes of the two classes above, who have been denied all knowledge of God in their upbringing and education, and who therefore are aware of nothing of value in the world except what those who have abandoned God have to offer them. Moreover, those who have no time for God possess full control of a thousand means of influencing others, in the entertainment, newspaper, publishing, educational, social and business world, and all their influence is brought to bear on promoting the principle that human beings have enough to content them in this world alone, and do not need God.

The very best of Christians and Catholics will find themselves struggling against these obstacles in trying to maintain or to grow in union with God by grace. The very passage of time finds each one drifting more and more toward the view that there is enough of a purpose for their lives to fulfill in the things of this world alone, apart from God. In short, we all tend away from union with God, and toward a "Live-happy-ever-after" marriage with the world.

3.

The third conviction that makes Lent worthwhile for good Catholics must be expressed by them as follows:

Lent is a divinely inspired period of time offered to me each year; 1) for re-fixing my mind and heart on the one great purpose of my existence; 2) for brushing aside the obstacles that I myself have raised up, and those that are all around me, to the attainment of my goal; 3) for leading me to use abundantly the source of all union with God, which is grace obtainable through the sacraments and through the meditations that make grace effective.

After what has been said above, it can readily be seen how perfectly Lent is set up to inspire men to do what they must do for their happiness and peace; it can be seen how, without a Lenten season each year, thousands would never be checked in their drifting away from God and toward a complete dependence on the material world in which they live.

1) Lent is designed to inspire men to know God, to remember Him, to desire Him, to submit to Him.

This purpose is fulfilled by the fact that throughout the whole of Lent the effort is made to fix the minds of Christians in a special and continuous way on God incarnate, God suffering and dying for His people, God desiring that His people be reunited and remain united to Him.

It is an axiom of Christian spirituality that God could not be adequately known, and His love could not be sufficiently appreciated, and His desire for the companionship of His human creatures could not have been made convincing enough unless He became man and suffered and died for mankind as He did. We are all dependent on the lessons of Christ's passion and death for the knowledge and remem-

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brance of God that leads to the burning desire to be united with Him. Without that we might know God by reason as our Creator, and recognize Him as the rewarder and punisher of mankind, and even pray to Him as the source of all good. But all this would not be enough to offset the tendency within us to forget God and to try to be content with the world alone. The tendency still operates within us, even since God became man and suffered and died for us; but the only thing that can counterbalance it is direct thought and meditation on the suffering Christ endured for our welfare.

The right attitude toward Lent, therefore, must arouse the determination to use it to think about Christ in His personal relation as redeemer to ourselves. Everything else about Lent has to be related to this. If Lent does not bring us to more intimate thoughts about the suffering Christ, and to a deeper appreciation of His love for us, and a more intense desire to be united with Him, it is wasted on us. All the many reminders of the suffering Christ in the liturgy and office, in the frequent public observance of the way of the cross, in the sad chants and striking symbols and mourning signs that are all part of the season, are intended to lead the individual into the presence of Christ where he will recognize the greatest of all loves and want to give in return the greatest of his own love.

2) *Lent is designed to help people push aside the obstacles that they themselves have raised, or that might be raised, to prevent their union with God through Christ.*

This is the principle under which personal penance enters into Lent as a necessary part of its observance. Everybody finds, when Lent comes around, that during the year he has either chosen some forbidden pleasures

that deprived him of God, or has at least drifted into a greater fondness for what the world has to offer than is compatible with a growing union with God. In either case penance is the only antidote for the disease that has afflicted the soul, and the only thing that can prevent the same thing from happening again.

Thus penance has a twofold necessary role to play in every Christian's life. The first is the role of atonement and the second is that of detachment. Atonement is made by the giving up of some good thing, because bad things were taken in the past. He who sinned by indulging the forbidden pleasure of lust, makes his atonement by denying his body some innocent pleasure that he might enjoy. He who sinned by gluttony or drunkenness needs to remove the obstacle this sin raised between himself and God by denying his appetite in some way. The thought that inspires the penance must always be God and the desire of union with Him. "I lost God by my sin. I must return to God by my penance."

But penance must also serve the purpose of detachment. Since the danger is universal that men will become too wrapped up in the world to think very much about God, all must do penance to achieve a sense of detachment from the world. This is the philosophy behind the command of the Church that her children eat less than they wish to, and forego certain foods during Lent. They must prove to themselves that they can take bodily pleasures or leave them alone, before they can apply themselves successfully to growth in union with God.

It is almost as important for the fulfillment of the purposes of Lent for individuals to adopt voluntary penances of their own as to carry out those that are commanded. Individuals

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alone can know to what they are most attached in this world. Each one needs to adopt some form of self-denial that lessens the hold of some part of the world on him, and thus frees him for greater advances in union with God.

Whatever penance is done during Lent becomes easy and rewarding for one who accepts it in union with Christ suffering His bitter passion. The thought in his mind is this: "Christ suffered terribly, nay infinitely, to make it possible for me to be united to God. He asks me to add just a tiny bit of my suffering to His. What I can add is small, insignificant, trivial. Yet it is accepted as a great thing by Christ and made a means of my assurance of union with God. Therefore it shall be gladly given."

3) *Lent is the season in which thoughts about the suffering Christ, and penances of atonement and detachment from the world, should lead one inevitably to a more frequent and more fervent use of the sacraments through which grace brings his soul closer and closer to God.*

The end to which Lent must lead

is God — union with God. God places Himself within reach of me, and provides the means of intimate union with Him, in the Mass and in the sacraments. Therefore all meditation on the suffering Christ, and all practices of mortification and self-denial, and all the submissiveness to God's will that is fostered during Lent, should lead one unfailingly to frequent attendance at Mass and reception of Holy Communion. Each such attendance at Mass and each reception of Holy Communion will be marked by a deeper and more practical fervor, which will make fully effective the graces that are abundantly poured out in the soul through these means.

The result of all this will be a conscious union with God that will carry over into the rest of the year when Lent is past and gone. Every Lent will thus succeed in raising the person who uses it well to a higher plane of spiritual contact with God, until his last Lent on earth will be but a preface to his glorious face-to-face, everlasting union with God in heaven.

Giving Our Worst

By a strange paradox and inversion, we in the West have claimed superiority in everything except the things in which we are superior. We have extended to Asia all the accidents of the West; but we have hardly dared to say a word for the substance of the West—least of all, for the soul of the West—its faith. We have taught Asiatics to dress in Western clothes at the very moment when those clothes were uglier than they ever were before and, let us hope, ever will be again. But so far from giving them the best European ideas, we have allowed them to give us the very worst Asiatic ideas. Fatalism, pessimism, the paralysis of the fighting spirit, the contempt for individual justice; all these things have been allowed to creep into our culture until they are practically the negative religion of our time. We have conquered the body of the East and let it conquer the soul of the West . . . Nobody has ever put up a temple like the Parthenon in a forest of Chinese pagodas. What we have put up is any number of our most vulgar hotels and factories . . . Nobody has set up anything like the Cathedral of Seville to face the Taj Mahal. We have set up only tents and golf clubs.

G. K. Chesterton

Why Is a Nun?

Nuns are mysterious to many who see them on the streets, in hospitals, on trains heading for some abandoned area of the world. But nuns are people, just people who have learned a great secret—the secret the whole world needs to know.

M. J. Huber

THE WORLD at large does not spend much time in thinking about nuns, because it does not see them very often. But when the world sees a nun, now and then, it wonders silently, "Why is a nun?"

Tell the world that in the United States there are about 150,000 nuns, and the world will ask more insistently, "Why?" But take the 150,000 nuns out of the schools and hospitals and orphanages and homes for the aged and poor and wayward and a few other places, and the world, in a belated awakening would learn at least one answer to the question, "Why is a nun?"

Even Catholics, sometimes, may wonder, "Why is a nun?" For many people find it hard to understand why young women become nuns; why a girl will give up home and family and money and married love and her own way of doing things and all the happiness the world seems to offer and go off to a convent.

Well, since the world and a few other people want to know why a girl gives up all these things to become a nun, let's look for a few reasons, and then perhaps all of us will be able to answer more clearly the question, "Why is a nun?"

Why is a nun? First of all because one day she heard Someone say: "If you want to be perfect, if you want to do more than you are obliged to do, then give up everything in the world,

including yourself, and follow Me."

That's the first answer to the question, "Why is a nun?" For the world, it is perhaps the most difficult answer to understand. Our Lord spoke those words, when He was on earth, to the young man who asked Him what else he could do, besides keeping the commandments, to prove his love for God. "If you want to please Me very much, give up everything in the world and walk with Me." That was God's answer to the young man's question, and it is God's answer to the question, "Why is a nun?" And God never gives a wrong answer. He never makes a mistake.

So, of every nun in the world we can say that she is a nun because Our Lord said those same words to her, "Give up everything and follow Me." Perhaps, when He first spoke those words to her, they were just a whisper, after Holy Communion one day, or during a visit to the tabernacle.

Then God used His own wise, slow, careful way of telling her about the riches of poverty, the fruitfulness of chastity, the victory of obedience.

He told her, too, in His own way, how much He loved her, and He let her understand how much He wanted her to love Him in a very special way, and that she could really love Him that much, if He helped her.

And so she did.

You see, it's a bit involved. It's a little bit like people in the world being in love, only much different. Well,

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you know. You can't *really* understand it unless you've lived through it. But that's the first answer to the question, "Why is a nun?" And certainly it is a very sensible answer. As we pointed out, it's God's answer, and He is always right.

Why is a nun? Because being a nun is the planned way for her to follow Our Lord. The first step along that way is to give up all the things in the world. A nun does this by making a vow of poverty. She makes herself poor not only because Christ asked her to be poor to imitate Him in His poverty, but above all because, with the help of God's grace, she used her common sense to see that the things of the world hold a terrible power to draw her heart away from God; and so, to keep the things of the world from getting in her way when she begins to walk toward God, she gains control over them by renouncing all control over them.

This first step of choosing a poor life helps her to begin walking away from the ever present danger of giving herself to the things of the world instead of giving herself to God.

Why is a nun? Because God asked her to be poor, and she said she would. God asks her to keep on being poor, and so, all her life, she will be poor with Christ and for love of Him. Because her heart is poor, — poor as a stable, — and because she wants Him in her heart, He comes again every day to be poor with her, and every day is Christmas in her heart.

Why is a nun? Because she has a heart that was made to love, and she wanted only a perfect love.

When a nun makes her vow of chastity, she surrenders her woman's privilege of married love, children and a home of her own. But what strategy in

that surrender, which gains the sweet victory won only by the few! Yes, her woman's heart is made to love. If it cannot love it will break. If she refuses to let her heart go out to those things which she is allowed to love, to those things to which she is humanly impelled, and if she does not find some other love on which her heart can feed, then her heart will starve or else turn back to the things it has surrendered.

But if she turns her heart to a good that is greater than the good she has forsaken, if she gives her heart, with all its love, to God, the greatest good of all, her heart each day will find new strength and love; each day her heart will grow until it is big enough to make her be both mother and sister to childhood and old age, and strong enough to love God alone for all her life and forever in heaven.

Why is a nun? Because she has learned that her worst enemy is her *self*, which always wants to have its own sweet way in everything, even though it may mean offending God. So she does the very reasonable thing of choosing an unreasonable way of living by making a vow of obedience; for surely it does seem unreasonable to give up your own will for the rest of your life and bind yourself by vow to do the will and fulfill the commands of another human being who has been appointed your superior.

But that is only the human way of looking at the whole procedure. A nun knows, because she has God's word for it, that when she gives up her own will by her vow of obedience, God will take care of her always. And when she stands for judgment before the Son of God, at the end of her life, she will not be asked to give any account of the things she did in obedience to the will or command of her

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superior. Isn't that something to look forward to all your life and especially at the moment when you die?

Where do nuns come from? It is probably difficult for us to remember clearly the mental reaction we experienced the first time we saw a Sister. A dress so different; a strange looking somebody we saw only in church, or school, or in the corridors of a hospital. I suppose that question is asked mentally, perhaps unknowingly, not only by children, but also, and more consciously, by many other persons, especially those to whom life in the convent is the great unknown.

Where do Sisters come from? They come from homes like yours, from the city and from the farm, from rich families and poor, from high schools and colleges, from offices and stores. They are girls who went to parties or dances, who had friends and perhaps boy friends. They are normal human beings, with all the tastes and inclinations, likes and dislikes of any other human being. They are not girls who couldn't find or keep a boy friend. They gave up their home and probably got very homesick during their first weeks of convent life. They gave up their family, their friends, their work, perhaps a career, their social life, because they wanted something better, because they wanted to do more for God than they had to do, because they wanted to give their life to God, to spend their life in the service of others for the love of God.

When a girl enters the convent, she is still the same girl she was the day before. When she puts on the dress of a Sister, she still has the same human nature she had all the years before. She doesn't make a saint of herself by throwing a veil over her head. When she steps into the convent, she does

not expect a life of ease in which the greatest effort expected of her is to develop a pious look. As soon as she gets into that convent, she really goes to work, and first of all, she goes to work on herself before she begins to try to work for others. She tries, with God's help, to make herself more pleasing to God. She learns, more and more, to control her inclinations; she trains herself, develops her talents, all her powers and abilities; she strives day by day to overcome weakness and to develop strength of soul, so that she may be well prepared to spend her whole life in the service of God and His children.

Why is a nun? Because she is human and weak, like all of us. She found out, by actually living the life of a nun, that being human and weak is much less dangerous for you in the convent, where God hands out His graces in much bigger bundles than in the world.

In the convent she can put in a full day's work and pray for several hours besides. The trick of it is that she gets up rather early every morning and tries to use every minute of her time. There aren't such things as movies and card-clubs and visiting to eat into her day, and so she has that extra time to pray. More than that, God and she usually live in the same house, and she receives Him into her heart every morning at holy Mass. And I'm sure that the Mother of God, whom she resembles very much, is working and praying with her all the time.

All these things are the reasons why God gives her bigger bundles of grace, and that's why she finds that being human and weak is less dangerous for herself in the convent.

Why is a nun? Because she is brave and strong and generous and loyal. She found out that the brave, the

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strong, the generous, the loyal can do more for the world by walking away from it than they could do by staying in it where they might be swallowed up and be lost in the rush of things in no time at all. And when a nun has given up the world, she comes back to it and takes care of almost everybody in it: the children in schools and in orphanages; the aged and infirm; the sick in the hospitals and in their homes.

And so you find nuns everywhere in the world: on the tiny islands lost in the ocean and in the great cities of any land. Wherever civilization has somewhat smoothed the way, you will find the nuns; wherever civilization has not yet entered, you still find the nuns, helping to smooth the way for others to follow. Any part of the world that can be reached by some kind of transportation has been reached by the nuns; and if there is no means of transportation, they'll eventually find a way of getting there or else go there on foot.

Yes, a nun is a nun because she is brave and strong; but she doesn't forget to pray for help. And because she is generous and loyal to God in giving all, including herself, see how the good God gives when she asks.

A few nuns go out to a new mission. They look at the place. Not much in sight to make the heart leap with joy. Not much for a beginning. So they get down on their knees and say: "Dear God, we have no school, no home. We'll build them ourselves, Lord, if you want us to, but You had better send some bricks and mortar and wood and nails and a few hammers and saws."

Then they go to work themselves to look for and beg for the lumber and stones and tools; and with the help of God they get them. It may

take a little time, but they get what they pray and work for, and sometimes they do help with their hands to build the school or convent they need.

Why does a nun wear the unusual style of dress she calls a habit? Well, we could answer that question by saying that a nun wears a habit for the same reason that any woman wears an ordinary or an unusual dress or hat: because she wants to. Nobody forces a woman in the world or a nun in the convent to wear any particular kind or style of dress or head-covering. It's a matter of free choice. But when a nun does choose to wear a habit, she has the right to say that her kind of dress tells all the world what kind of woman she is and what she is trying to do with her life. There's no doubt about it.

The real reason, however, why a nun wears a habit is that when she gets inside it she finds it easier to give herself to God. By wearing a habit she takes the convent with her, no matter where she goes or what she does. By wearing a habit, a nun, once and for always, settles the problem of choosing hats and dresses and breaking her head over styles and colors. One style for her and always the same color. So she frees herself from the ever threatening tragedy of discovering that another woman has a dress or a hat like hers; and the more nuns she sees with a dress like hers, the happier she becomes, because, she says, "The more of us there are, the more we can do for God and for the world."

Why is a nun? Because God knew what He was doing when He gave us the broad outlines of that kind of life and said, "Let him who can take it,

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take it." A nun is a nun because the Catholic Church knew what she was doing when she allowed women to become nuns. She fashioned a way of life built on the plan given by God, a way of life whereby women would have the opportunity of giving to God and all His children the best and most precious things they have.

Why is a nun? To tell the world that will not listen, "You don't need the United Nations Organization, you don't need pacts and treaties, you don't need wars. What you need, my dear but foolish world, is the spirit of the convent, to live the belief that we are all sisters and brothers because we have only one Father who is God."

When the men and women of the world are ready to accept with their minds all the things that nuns are willing to do with their lives, — to love all men, the white and the yellow, the red and black and brown, to love the lepers and the cancerous, to love the saints and the sinners, — then you can give the secret of the atomic bomb and of the hydrogen bomb to all the nations of the world. And there will be peace; the peace that is in the heart of the nun. Because God will be not only in His heaven, not only in the hearts of some, but God will be in the hearts of all His children in the world.

And no one will ever again be inclined to ask: "Why is a nun?"

Just Testing

A priest friend of ours was telling us about an interesting experience he had a while back. Seems one morning there was a knock on the back door of the rectory and an agitated gentleman stood there and proclaimed that he stood in need of an immediate loan of five dollars.

"What for?" said the priest.

"I can't explain right now," said the caller, who was quite well-dressed, "but I've got to have it right now, and I promise to pay you back within an hour."

Well, our friend hemmed and hawed, and said he didn't operate that way, and one thing and another, and finally ended up by making the loan.

Mentally waving goodbye to his five dollars, our friend sat down to his breakfast when the front doorbell rang. On answering the summons, the priest was surprised to find the same gentleman he had been talking to a moment before standing there.

"Here's your money, Father," said the caller. "I'm not a Catholic, but I had a bet with my friend out there in the car that when you are really down and out you can always count on a Catholic priest to give you a lift."

Maybe the story indicates that a priest is usually an easy mark. Maybe, all things considered, that's a good reputation for the priesthood to have.

The female gender
In search of splendor
Is less the tender
Than spender gender.

Tom Talman, *Bluebook*



Thoughts for the Shut-in

L. F. Hyland

On Patience

One of the great trials of illness is that which arises from the long periods of "waiting" that one must endure while ill. It seems to the sick person that he is always waiting for something.

He waits longingly for a certain pain to subside. He waits for sleep to come when he is restless or suffering. He waits for the doctor to report on tests that have been taken. One day an X-ray is taken; he must wait for the doctor to tell him what it revealed. Another day it is a blood count or a metabolism test, or a blood sugar count. Rarely does the patient ever receive a report immediately after such tests are taken. He must wait, and sometimes it is thought advisable that no report be made.

Waiting for someone to come or for something to happen is always a trial, but doubly so for the sick person who cannot help feeling that so much depends on the things he has to wait for.

There is a special kind of patience that must be exercised during these waiting periods. It is a patience made up of confidence in God's good will, and of resignation to what He may decree for the future. It is idle to resent the fact that doctors act slowly, and try to study every angle of the case before making a decision, and sometimes cannot even be sure after they have examined all the evidence. They are human beings, with finite abilities, yet men who have devoted a large part of their lives to learning all that can be known about the human body. The very fact that they act slowly at times is a guarantee of their thoroughness; the fact they cannot cure every disease is a proof that God continues to hold many of the secrets of life and death in His own hands.

But God does know everything and does rule everything, and permits nothing to happen without a good and wise reason. In the waiting periods of illness, therefore, the shut-in must try to relax as if he lay in the hands of God. The doctor will do his best, which may not always mean a cure. But God will do the best and most perfect thing of all—He will not let anything happen that is not for the temporal and eternal welfare of the patient who trusts Him. One waits with patience who waits for God to manifest and carry out His will.

The Problem of Exchanging Prisoners

Everybody has been reading in the papers about the stalemate in the prisoner of war problem in Korea. How many know that the same problem was faced and solved eight centuries ago?

E. F. Miller

IT IS TO be hoped that by the time these lines reach the pages of *THE LIGUORIAN*, the prisoner of war impasse in Korea will be broken through.

The problem is this.

The United Nations do not wish to send back to the Communist lines the North Korean and Chinese prisoners who were captured by United Nations soldiers and who do not wish to return. The Communists insist on having back all these men whether they want to return or not. The United Nations say that they will force no soldier to return to his former allegiance against his will, especially in view of the fact that this would probably mean punishment and even death for many of such returnees. It is supposed to be a disgrace for a Communist soldier to be taken prisoner. Short shrift is given him once he falls into the hands of his leaders. The United Nations will have no part in this barbarity.

Because the United Nations will not return the Communist prisoners, the Communists will not return the American prisoners. And so the impasse in the peace negotiations. Nobody seems to know what to do.

This situation and what is being done to relieve it gives cause for reflection on how uninventive we Americans are these days to find schemes and plans to make easier the life of the spirit when the spirit (as is the case of the prisoners on both sides of the lines) is more burdened with hardships than was the body in the dark ages of history.

We in America are able to invent trains that go a mile a minute and airplanes that go a mile a second. We are able to devise newer and better bathtubs, iceboxes and automobiles. Our creative genius and our technical knowledge are the envy of the world. But our finest brains cannot fashion a simple little key that will unlock the chains that are holding back the peace negotiations and threatening to destroy the lives of many prisoners who are caught in their entanglement.

Perhaps our progress has not been so startling as we like to believe. Perhaps our progress has been almost entirely along mechanical lines and very little along the lines of the spirit.

There was another day some eight hundred years ago when the same problem prevailed. It was the period that some of our modern intellectuals like to call the dark ages because no one was licensed then to teach little children the tenets of atheism and Communism.

The Moors, who at that time inhabited Africa, and whose religion was Mohammedanism, had the strange custom of making raids on the seacoast of and sometimes quite far inland into Italy, France and Spain, and of seizing as many Christian prisoners as they could, and making slaves of them once they got them back into the land of Mohammed. Fifty francs were given by a Moorish chief to his subjects for every Christian that they would kidnap and bring back to him alive.

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These marauders were not a great deal different from the Communists today, at least insofar as their treatment of prisoners went. Nor were they different in their practice of seizing innocent people and making slaves of them. Reports are constantly sifting back to us of secret police raiding the homes of citizens in countries behind the Iron Curtain and secretly shipping them off to Siberia or to mines in order to force them to work for Russia whether they want to or not. What is the difference between a pirate ship and a pirate policeman? The effects are the same. Slavery.

One of the religious beliefs of the Mohammedans was that a believer was assured of heaven if he killed a Christian; that the killing of a Christian was a favor done to Mohammed. A Christian in the Africa of the early middle ages stood about as much chance of humane treatment as a Christian in Russia stands today. We all know that that is not very much.

Stories are told of Christian slaves being thrown to lions and tigers and panthers when they became too bold or too sick to work any longer; of other captives forced to use the skulls of their dead companions as drinking cups or to be deprived of water entirely; of men and women who believed in Christ being forced to walk scores of miles in great heat and numbing cold as were the Americans who got caught in the march of death that was centered about Bataan in the second world war. These are but a few of the tortures that the unfortunate victims of the Moorish raids were made to endure. Open the history book of man's inhumanity to man and you will find everything written down there that was tried by the cruel masters of Africa during the middle ages.

The unfortunate captives stretched

out their arms to Europe for help as are the captives of the Korean war stretching out their arms to America. Governments could do little in the way of relief unless they wanted to take the chance of throwing the whole world into war. The Mohammedans of that time controlled as much of the world as the Communists control today. So, what was to be done?

It was just at this point that the strange thing happened which we, with all our vaunted scientific knowledge, cannot seem to duplicate. The unscientific, "unprogressive," "unenlightened" people of Europe found a solution. They may not have been able to invent a sewing machine, a ski-lift or an atomic bomb; but they had enough inventive genius to figure out a scheme for the ransoming of the captives, for an exchange of prisoners, even though the ones with whom the deal was made were as inhuman and as evil as the members of the Politburo.

This is how it was done.

A man named John was born in the province of Provence in France in the year 1160. It was at this time that the seizing and enslaving of Christians was at its height. A constant and paralyzing fear hung over the seacoast towns and cities of Europe. And many a home mourned the loss of a father or a brother or a husband. There seemed to be no redress, no hope of cessation of the evil or ransom of the captives.

John of Matha (Matha was his native town) showed signs of high spirituality as a boy, these signs becoming more apparent as he grew into manhood. It was natural that he should desire to become a priest. On the day he said his first Mass, while he was pronouncing the words of consecration, he was privileged with a vision. In this vision he saw an angel standing on the altar before him, dressed in a white

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robe with a red and blue cross on the front of the robe.

The young man was not one given to pipe dreams and hallucinations. He was as sensible as a salesman or a sailor, as sensible as you or I. He knew that he was not asleep when he saw the vision. He knew that to all intents and purposes the youth appearing before him was just as solidly built as was he himself. There was no doubt as to the fact that he really and truly saw something or somebody on the altar. He could describe in minute detail everything about the visitor, in greater detail indeed than if the visitor had been a friend dropping in from next door.

The question was, what should he do about it?

The first thing he did was to pray long and fervently that God should enlighten him as to the meaning of the apparition. Then he did the wisest thing that he could think of—he took the problem to the Pope, who at that time was Innocent III. He felt that the Vicar of Christ should be able to tell him better than anybody else whether or not he was the victim of his own imagination. Popes are famous for not jumping to conclusions. And Innocent III was more famous in this regard than most of the others. The one thing that he did not favor was the founding of all kinds of new religious orders. He preferred the old religious orders step up their fervor rather than new orders be founded only to become lax. So, if John of Matha's vision was a false invitation to start an order, it would get little hearing from the Holy Father. That's what John wanted to find out—was his vision false or true?

Strange to say, when John recounted his experience to the Pope, Innocent said that the same thing had happened to him. He too had seen a young man

standing on the altar at the moment of consecration, dressed in a long white gown with a great red and blue cross appended to the breast. As they pondered over the unusual occurrence, John took courage and mentioned to the Holy Father an aspiration that he had from the time he was a small boy, namely, that of gathering together a group of intelligent and spiritual men who would spend their lives in working for the ransom of the Christian captives in Africa.

The Pope listened. He asked questions. He told John to come back another day to discuss the matter at greater length. Meanwhile he would pray. He would talk over the idea with his advisors. A few days passed. And then suddenly he gave his consent. A religious order was to be founded named the Order of Trinitarians after the Holy Trinity, its members dressing as was dressed the angel in the vision, the sole aim of which order would be the placating of the Moors so that they would release their Christian slaves. The necessary documents were drawn up, the papal approbation was given in writing, and John left Rome knowing now for certain what God wanted him to do for the rest of his life. But he had little idea as to how he was to accomplish his mission. Without money and without companions his start was definitely inauspicious. But God would provide.

A plan was not long in being formed. He would collect alms from the faithful. To what better use could money be put than for the ransoming of the prisoners languishing in the slave-holds of Africa? There would be complaining, of course, on the part of those who were asked to give. But it was ever thus. Just because people complained was no sign that the noble work of gathering money for a good cause should be given up. If the fear

of what people might say was to be the criterion of the work, it were better that the work never had the chance to begin. Alms would be taken up. And with these alms the Trinitarians would buy back the Christians in captivity.

Of course it was not all as simple as this. Somebody would have to carry the alms over to the Mohammedan chiefs, make certain that the money was not stolen enroute, and use every precaution not to end up in captivity himself. Furthermore, the emissary would have to possess great powers of diplomacy as well as holiness in order that a true deal might be made insuring the exchange of the prisoners. Where would men of this stamp be found?

But first of all, the money had to be secured. To do this John began his tours through Europe. There was hardly a town, village or city that he did not visit. The response was magnificent. No mere human agent could have opened the purses as well as the hearts of total strangers as John succeeded in doing. God must have been behind the work, for money rolled in, in flood proportions. And as money rolled in, vocations began to appear. Young men of every class and attainment began clamoring to be taken in as novices. The order grew until it had foundations by the score in every Catholic country. And before the collections stopped, the equivalent of a *billion dollars* had been gathered.

When the men had been sufficiently trained in holiness of soul as well as in the arts they would need in their delicate work of bargaining with the Mohammedans, they were sent over to Africa. It must have been dangerous work. It is too bad that an account of the adventures of these brave men has not come down to us. Most of our

modern novels would undoubtedly seem dry alongside these adventures. Their sallies into the enemy territory might be likened to the sallies that Americans would make into Communistic territory in order to release American prisoners.

How the Trinitarians escaped with their lives will always be a mystery. Many of them did not escape. By the middle of the seventeenth century there had been marked up on the tablets of extreme heroism *seven thousand* martyrs! But the blood of these brave men and the efforts of their confreres who lived to tell the story of their accomplishments brought about the ransom of *nine hundred thousand* captives by the middle of the seventeenth century! The number seems incredible. But authentic records can be found in the archives of the order. Surely God was in the work; else it never could have been done.

How could these men do so much in the solving of a problem about which we can do so little?

One reason is that their "inventive genius" was a power of the soul rather than only of the mind. They drew their inspiration from the world of the spirit rather than from the world of the material. They were men whose minds were not consumed and stunted by machines, money and the things that make for bodily comfort. They were geniuses of the soul. And from their holiness came the miracle of the ransom of captives.

When America rises above the level of the body and dwells on the level of the spirit, there will not be wanting men who will conceive plans, as did John of Matha, for the ransom of American prisoners in Korea. Until then we can hope for no more than compromise or total war. Of these two, the one is no better than the other.

Your Death

These are thoughts that make good men out of bad, saints out of sinners, lovers of God out of lovers of the world. Isn't it time for a change in you?

F. M. Lee

Don't turn the page.

Don't run away because of those two words up there. You are only running into its arms. We all are.

There was one man who stayed and looked at death, listened to all it had to say, and, for the rest of his life, he never feared it again. Would you like that? Never to fear death again? Well, here is the way it happened for him.

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful queen. Her name was Isabella, and she was ever surrounded by brave, adoring courtiers. Beloved above all to this queen was a handsome, young nobleman, whose name was Borgia. Francis Borgia. He loved his queen purely and deeply. He had laid his sword at her feet, and he hoped for long and happy years of honor and high position at her brilliant court.

But the queen died, as queens will, and she died very young, as some queens won't. The sad and broken Francis Borgia accompanied her funeral cortege in the long journey across the hot Spanish countryside to the city of Granada. Finally, they arrived at the palace, and a ponderous, legal-looking individual came out and declared that the casket must be opened to make sure it was really the queen inside.

Now, this was all before the days of our modern, clever embalming. And so, when the casket was opened, there was simply sheer horror. The stench, the pockmarked, decaying face, the sight of the milling vermin, struck the young courtiers like a nauseating flood. They groaned, they fled.

All except one. Francis Borgia stayed. There were sudden tears in his eyes, but they were not for the queen. They were the kind of tears that St. Paul must have shed as he rode out to persecute the Christians, and being suddenly struck from his horse by the Almighty, lay, crying there in the dust, a blinded man. But now, Francis is speaking to his queen for the last time.

"Oh Lady, you can take every hope that I ever had for honor and glory and put it beside you in that casket. I see now how death hovers like a shadow over all earthly beauty, mocking it, waiting to turn it into dust again. Farewell, my poor queen, I go to serve a Master Who can never die!"

And he went out to become one of the greatest Saints that God ever had. All because he had the courage to stand and look death full in the face. Let us.

After all, you know that the trees are already growing on the hillside, the trees that will someday cradle you against eternity. That not too pleasant picture — your own coffin. And yet, your pall-bearers are alive today, my friend. The machinery to carry you out of the land of the living is already in motion. Your own heartbeat of this very moment promises you there must be a last heartbeat some day. It cannot just go on. Your dear heart is your guarantee of death.

Shall we grow military for a moment, and plan our little campaign with death? Not against death, for we can never be victors there. We shall die. The curse of death is on us, and even

the Son of God felt that curse of death on His cross. But plan our campaign we will, and the first line across our blueprint is bold and definite. It is this. Death will come.

Look at your watch for one minute. Do it. During that minute, about two thousand people died. At each second, another one stood before his God to hear the eternal decision, the final judgment on his life. All day, all night, they suddenly appear before Him, like endless millions of leaves, slipping quietly to the ground in the autumn of the year.

Up the polished marble steps goes Death, past the armed guards goes death, to lay its cold irrevocable hand upon the most important shoulder in the world. And never has it been known to ask, "How ready — how rich — how old are you?"

We find ourselves uncomfortably remembering the beautiful, glossy-leaved, fig tree that our Lord one morning cursed until it shrivelled before the eyes of the apostles. Uncomfortable, not because He cursed it, but because He cursed it for its barrenness, whereas no fig tree in all Palestine was bearing fruit just then. It was not the season for fruit. Why curse a tree for barrenness in the early spring, when it was supposed to be barren? Why, except to warn us, who put off our complete conversion to God until the autumn of our lives — until we think it is time to turn to God. And find that our shrivelled souls, cursed for unproductiveness, cannot turn in their clay sockets.

So we shall die. And the thought of it strikes us with the force of a feather landing on a pink cloud.

We have seen an hourglass. The glass with just enough opening for a grain of sand to pass through at its wasp-waist. The bottom and top are

closed off, and exactly enough sand is put into the top as will take an hour to pass through the opening. When the hour is over, all the sand is on the bottom. It is no accident. That is all the sand there was.

And down a highway in Minnesota, at seventy and eighty miles an hour, two automobiles are recklessly closing up the distance between each other. Four young people in each car, four young drunk people, and the sands of their lives are running out fast. Their clothes and their consciences are badly dishevelled, and in three minutes they will stand before their Creator and give an account of their lives. Meanwhile, we shall be using acetylene torches to separate their poor bodies from the tangle of steel and glass. Death must have seemed so far away as they began that ride. The papers called it an accident. There was no accident. That was all the life they had been given, and it ran out.

If we could only get that picture clearly. The hourglass of our own lives. What is left in the top? How much? Three hours? The papers may call it an accident, but that was all the life that you had. Perhaps you will never get to a confessional again. Never to be absolved again. A blood clot, a stroke, a speeding car — God will get to you no matter where you are. Neither He nor you will add a grain of life. It was all settled before you were born, and it has been running through all these years. Have you an hour left? How many people live in mortal sin?

No longer are we drawing bold lines in our blueprint for the campaign with death. Very shaky lines, for death has all the advantage here. It can strike from behind. Forty thousand people will die tomorrow morning, and twenty-five thousand will not even see

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death coming. They will be as young as you, younger; as healthy as you, healthier; richer, poorer than you, and suddenly their brain will be paralyzed in death and they will be dragged before the judgment seat of God to answer for it all. What if you are standing there with them? You could be, you know.

They are sitting in their homes tonight, quite alive.

Perhaps in a bad marriage.

Waiting for Easter. They will clean up then. Confession faithfully once a year with the whole year's load of sin.

By two o'clock tomorrow afternoon, their bodies will be waiting for identification at some morgue or other. Tonight, they expect death exactly as much as you do. Death is for hospitals and battlefields, and for the old.

Christ died for us, loves us, and yet, because He must judge us, He was almost pleading when He said, "I will come to you like a thief in the night," As though:

"If there is anyone you don't want Me to find you with, if there is any place, any home, any car wherein you don't want me to discover you, stay out of it! I promise you that I shall come as a thief! No sound, unexpected, unseen. When do you least expect me, married man, when do you least want me? Single man? Woman? I have warned you. Don't gamble that I lie!"

If Adam and Eve had not committed their sin, we would not be thinking of death this way. There would be no death to think of. God never meant our souls and bodies to be torn apart in a last agony. Soul and body were meant to be one, as they are in you today. And so we are terrified at the thought of this unnatural separation. No friends return to tell us about another life, all is surrounded with mystery, darkness, fear.

And yet, our own personal, eventual heaven or hell is not a thing suddenly thrust upon us the day we die. There is really no mystery about it at all. If a man keeps crying out to God throughout his life, "I will not have you," then his fate will have the simplicity of an echo on the day he dies. God crying back, "And I will not have you!" Nobody builds for hell and lives in heaven; no one builds for heaven and finds himself in hell. On the very promise of the Almighty:

"Man shall go into the house of his eternity." Just as you build it today. So the sinner arranges two hells for himself. One on this earth, a mental hell, where he lives without peace of mind; one in eternity, where he lives without peace of mind or body. A two-time loser.

A priest raced through Chicago in his car, rolled up at a hospital, and rushed for the bedside of his dying uncle. He was carrying the Blessed Sacrament, the holy oils. He came into a little vestibule, next to his uncle's room, and then, strangely enough, sat there for five hours until the man died. You see, his uncle had been living with a divorced woman for twelve years, and the woman was in the sick-room, and violently refused to let the priest enter. Long ago, that man had made his choice, and on this day, he would have to stay with it. The priest had brought his God as far as God would go, and now He waited, ten feet away. Waited for the man to die.

There is a line in the Scriptures, "I swear, as I am your God, I am not mocked!"

There is a line in the Scriptures, "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!"

We watch human life, and it becomes a grim thought that these human beings shall die as they have lived.

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The thought can take practically all the comfort out of lying in bed on a Sunday morning, instead of going to Mass. And the bed can seem like a veritable nest of spikes when we realize the compounded guilt of keeping the children away from the altar, away from the railing. The brooding fear of what it might be like this Sunday morning, to fall into the hands of the living God, maliciously defied, deliberately angered.

And what of the person who has surrendered to some secret sin? He has made a contract with impurity, and death may break into the contract at any minute. All the while, his hope for heaven is just a mockery, a vague waiting for a vague someone who will decide for him whether he wants heaven or hell. In the heart of every sin there is a dark core of unhappiness, and its name is death. The soul, dead in sin, and the body ever in jeopardy—what if death had been waiting there, what if the last grain of sand had run out, and he had died as he was living?

These are the houses we build, and God has promised us that man shall go into the house of his eternity. As he built it. And the poor soul, who lives down all the years of her life with a concealed sin on her soul. (If only she knew that sheer happiness, the sense of humility, the desire to help ever so kindly, that wells up in the heart of any priest to whom she says, there in the confessional, "Father, I held something back years ago. Please help me.") Carrying the dead lumber in her heart, knowing only unhappy years now, and an eternity of payment when death shall find her out. Go, dear soul, go to any priest. By the grace of God, go today!

And sometimes, in the abandon of his reaping, death strikes at those who choose to ignore the responsibility that

God has woven into the act of human love. They choose to ignore the child, choose an engineered sterility, or when mechanisms fail, choose murder.

The lady stopped the missionary after the last Mass. He had never seen anyone so broken, so despairing, so fearful.

"Oh, Father, what shall I do? My husband and I have prevented children these twenty years. This morning, Father, he was dead. Beside me. Dead. Oh, what can we do?"

Would it have done her and her husband any good to have looked upon the decaying face of Isabella, the queen? I doubt it. They would have simply come to know what death looked like. The courtiers, who fled from the casket of their queen, knew what death looked like. They knew, and they tore it out of their memories as they stumbled back to a life of pleasure. Knowing is not enough, so God said, "Remember, remember thy last end, and then, thou shalt never sin." That is why you find a skull, a death's head, somewhere in the portrait of the old saints. They were always remembering what death could do to them. They could not stop its invasion of their body, but their whole life was geared to make sure that death would never touch their soul.

Human love is blind. (In much the same order, so is chemical attraction.) One man had about five minutes to live, and the priest begged him to renounce the unlawful wife who stood at his death-bed. But the gentleman rose up in his bed to cry out, "I'll not tell her to go, I'll tell her that I love her and will love her in hell." And the life blood came pouring out of his mouth. Dead.

In hell he would love her. In hell he would hate and curse her for all eternity as the cause of his own endless

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agony. There is no love in hell. The peace of mind that you have never known in your bad marriage will not be waiting for you in hell. Aren't you human enough to want happiness and peace somewhere along the line? Dreamer, you haven't it today, and you have made sure you will never have it throughout the eternities.

But perhaps you have grown used to sin. Are you glad, at last? You may find another nugget of comfort in knowing that, quite often, a bad conscience does not trouble folks, even on their deathbed. You can kill off your conscience. One man did, and as he was dying, Cardinal Bellarmine leaned over him to suggest an act of contrition. The man looked up at him.

"Father, what is contrition?" He had five minutes in which to tell God that he was sorry for a lifetime of sin, and he did not even remember what sorrow meant.

As a missionary, one often enough meets people who are quite pleasant and blithe about living in sin. It is the nearest, known thing to the peace and beauty of a sepulchre. Christ acidly called it, "clean without, white-washed, and the corruption of bones within." One, the prince of the fallen angels, hopes they stay pleasant and blithe. He will never bother them, even on a deathbed. Why should he? They are in his pocket, and there is no struggle. Why take the case to court and argue further? He has the deed, signed, sealed, and delivered. Don't envy them.

For, there is a sentence in holy Scripture that holds what is about the most dangerous, final, shocking truth that has to do with us creatures of God. It is this: "Seek the Lord, while He may yet be found." While He may yet be found. So there can come a day when He can't be found. So there are people

walking about the streets of our cities, and they are already condemned to hell. They will step from this life into hell forever. Their last chance, their last grace, was turned down, and God will never bother them again. There is a peaceful death for you.

Because you have cared enough to follow these thoughts upon your death, this reading can be all the grace you will ever need. It may be your last, but it is enough, if it will lead you quickly to the confessional, or at least, for this moment, to kneel and make a fervent act of contrition. Start the road back. . . . Do that, remembering that on one of these todays, you will look for the first time into the eyes of Jesus Christ. Bravely look now, and say your act of sorrow deeply, lovingly, to Him.

Mercy is marvellous.

Perhaps, on the other hand, you are the one who has made plans for your deathbed. You will come back then. You will give up sin only when you no longer have the strength to commit it. You will snap your fingers, and God will come running. And the poor fool of a God, who demands that we intend to give up sin, will listen anxiously while you admit your transgressions, while you throw him the dregs of your life, and the sop of amendment forced on you by physical sickness.

Have you ever been really ill? So in pain that you cried to die? There lies such a one now, and his mind is growing dim. The pain quiets a bit, and a new anguish arises as he wonders who will take care of his broken wife and children. He wants to rise and protect them, but the sickness has taken the last ounce of his strength. He has never tried to conquer his flesh, and now he has fallen again and again. He is half crazed at the thought of the eternal hell before him. The terrible thing called despair is rising in the

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depths of his being. He is sick, heart-broken, his will weakened, and now — suddenly he is going to rise up and make a good confession of his whole life, 'his every bad action all those years; his strength will miraculously return, his mind will clear. . . . It won't. He spent a lifetime putting a different kind of machinery into motion, and now it moves heartlessly on to his destruction.

Mercy is marvellous, and he made a mockery of it, and his fate already lies across the Scriptures, "I swear, as I am your God, I am not mocked!" And this is mockery.

Oh, your priest will run to the bedside with everything the Church has. And your priest will come home to sit in his room, and stare awhile at the wall, and wonder — what kind of sorrow was that — what kind of amendment was that — what kind of consciousness was that?

A few days later, the priest will bury that man in consecrated ground, and

perhaps wonder where God has really buried his soul.

Too cruel? Oh no. St. Jerome is there to remind us that in all the Scriptures, only one man ever came back to God at the end of his life — the good thief. Just one. One, so we would not despair. But only one, lest we are thinking of trying it ourselves.

But ask the One, Who hung next to the good thief, and poured out His mercy that afternoon.

"Yes, the good thief. He came up out of a childhood of poverty and fear, he came to Me out of his years of ignorance and oppression. He came to Me at the end of the chase. I gave him one chance, and he took it."

"And you?" So many years, so many chances, so much mercy.

Lent is here, and all the Christian world turns to its God on the cross. Look up confidently, for This is the One Who forgave His murderers.

All of us.

"If you would see the world at its worst, look at the Cross of Good Friday. The world will never do anything quite as evil as it did that day. There was darkness over the earth then, the sun refusing to shed its light on the crime that would extinguish the Light of the World. And there is darkness over the earth today as there was then, and for the same reason, because Christ is re-crucified in those who believe and confess His Name. Giant curtains pulled over the Light do that; iron curtains in Eastern Europe, where in Stygian night hammers beat and sickles cut. But a day will come when He will lay hold of that hammer, hold it aloft in His resurrected scarred hand, and make it look like a Cross, and the sickle will appear as the moon under Our Lady's feet."

Bishop F. Sheen

Weight

Dragging along an extra forty or fifty pounds in the race of life is like trying to climb Jacob's ladder carrying a pair of loaded suitcases. The soul finds it hard to climb to heaven when the elbows are on the overloaded board and the hands are running a chain-and-bucket routine to the groaning digestive tract

The Messenger

Jehovah's Witnesses

Of all the strange religions in the modern world, none is stranger than that of Jehovah's Witnesses. Its relatively few members have made themselves known to almost all Americans. Here is their background.

J. E. Doherty

IN THE United States no boast is more fondly made than that of tolerance, supposedly given to all religious groups equally and absolutely, no matter how fantastic their creeds or how aggressive their expression of them. This is an idyll, true neither in fact nor in theory. How quickly the dream dissipates when someone raises up the issue of Catholicism as an international ghost threatening to turn the nation into its own image.

Catholics have a ready answer to their detractors in the passionate fervor with which they have sacrificed themselves in defense of the nation from the start. The truth is that Catholic principles bind all who accept them to honor their government and, indeed, all lawful authority, as from God. Since, moreover, the concept of man basic to democracy stems from the principles of the Christian faith, there is no greater safeguard of the American constitution than the fervor with which Catholics cling to their faith.

Nevertheless, there are sects which do put the boasted tolerance of America to a severe test, not only by their opposition to organized religion, but by stigmatizing the government of the nation itself as something evil. They claim to be opposed to its authority on grounds of conscience; they consider it a creation or an instrument of Satan; and they look for its dissolution along with the downfall of all churches both Catholic and Protestant, in order that a mythical kingdom of Jehovah may be established. Such, at least, are Jehovah's Witnesses.

"He who is annoyed by insignificant enemies," says Aesop, "only ends by injuring himself." He was speaking of a bald-headed man disturbed by a fly, who kept slapping at the fly and hitting himself on the head. This practical reasoning, in spite of our fine sentiments, is what really dictates the degree of sufferance given here to the Witnesses. Were they a more formidable group, tolerance of them would be less absolute, for they clash with a sentiment that is more universal in America than loyalty to a church, the sentiment of patriotism. There are two or three hundred thousand Witnesses, but the active ones have never numbered more than a hundred thousand, and, though they form not a church but an army or "theocracy," few people would hold them a threat to the nation.

Many, puzzled by their obstreperous and unpredictable behaviour, are inclined to look upon them benignly as a kind of last refuge for psychopaths; yet their beliefs have a definiteness dismally lacking today in almost all Protestant groups, and their message manages to evoke a fervor that is the envy of all others. With one difference they inherit the dour and pessimistic outlook of the sects awaiting the imminent arrival of Christ as Judge. The difference explains all that they do and say: they believe not merely that Christ is coming again, but that He has already arrived. This arrival, in fact, took place around the year 1914. Only by understanding this belief can one begin to understand Jehovah's Witnesses. But, as the Duke of Wellington said to a

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gentleman who accosted him thus: "Mr. Smith, I believe?" — "If you can believe that, you can believe anything."

That Christ will come again to judge the living and the dead is clearly stated in the Bible, but just as clearly does Our Lord also say that "no man knoweth the day nor the hour, neither the angels in heaven." Yet there have always been visionaries with a penchant for setting the exact date of the second coming. Certain prophecies in the Old Testament and in the Apocalypse are obscure to the most enlightened Scripture scholars, but these are precisely the ones the Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses interpret with astounding detail and concreteness. With the rise of Protestantism especially it became contagious for self-styled prophecies of the second coming.

The first Biblical sect to predict the end of the world was the contemporary of Martin Luther, the Anabaptists. They pre-dated it at the end of the Peasants' War in the year 1525. Later a prophet named Melchior Hofman seized the town of Munster and there set up the kingdom of "New Zion;" he called himself a witness to the coming of the Lord, but he had no connection with the present day Witnesses of Jehovah. In Germany also there arose a woman prophetess, one of the first to aver that she was the mother of Zion, and the woman "clothed with the sun," of whom the Apocalypse speaks. She and her husband, she said, were the Lord's witnesses and one of her sons was to be the Saviour of the world; he was to come with glory in the year 1730.

During the next century there were so many prognosticators of doomsday that if one then living had taken them seriously he would have done nothing but rise each day and wait for the shock of doom. Some of these were the

theosophist Schonherr, who identified Napoleon as anti-Christ marked with the sign of the beast; Christoph Hoffman, no relation to Melchior, who tried to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem for the Saviour's second coming; the Irvingites, who announced the dates of Christ's coming successively as 1838, 1864, and 1866.

Class Epp, the leader of the Mennonite Brethren, said that Christ would come in 1889, then in 1891; the reason he was wrong on the first calculation, he explained, was that he had based it on the hands of a wall clock which leaned slightly and thus threw him off; he did not explain his second mistake. In 1899 a sect called the Dukhobors came to Canada from Russia; they also had ideas on the second coming of Christ. Nearly sixteen hundred of them one bitter winter day set forth from their villages, some of them almost entirely nude, to wait the Lord's coming at a fore-destined site. Mounted police had to round them up and herd them home before they perished from the cold.

In this country the trek of the Mormons to Utah became famous; they went there from upper New York and New England to await the Lord's coming and to establish there his kingdom. The founder of the sect called the Adventists was William G. Miller. He convinced many that the date of the second coming would be 1842, then he corrected it to 1844. He was disillusioned, but his movement was saved by a woman, Mrs. Ellen G. White. Mrs. White had visions which plainly showed her that the coming of Christ was very imminent, but they were vague enough to set no date except a Saturday. The Seventh Day Adventists are still waiting.

The first date announced by Jehovah's Witnesses for the second coming

of Christ was 1874; then they gave Our Lord forty years' grace by moving it up to 1914 when he was to come visibly. Had it occurred to them that our calendar is a creation of the Popes, the Witnesses might have had an explanation when 1914 passed with no sign of the advent, but in the end they gave a better one. They wavered for a while and then went back to 1914 and stuck to it. "Christ came," they said, "but invisibly." He is floating around somewhere, they averred, and at any moment will descend and become visible.

"Of all the crackpot religions," says a writer in *Newsweek*, "the Witnesses are the wackiest to appear in this country." How did they come about? The tale begins with Pastor Charles Taze Russell, born in Pittsburgh, Pa., whose first avocation was that of a haberdasher. Brought up a Congregationalist when that meant to be a Calvinist and a Puritan, he was a sanctimonious man who was never comfortable with his Church's teaching on hell, and was particularly disturbed, like many a greater man, by the Calvinist picture of God predetermining those to be saved and lost. Yet, while still in his teens, he tried to convert an agnostic who shook the boy's faith with a few trenchant arguments. The preaching of the Adventists restored his faith; he liked especially the thought that when Christ came he would set up an everlasting kingdom on earth and there would be no more heaven or hell. From that point on he elaborated his own theology.

Russell became a "pastor" by the simple process of fancying himself God's witness, the first to really understand the Scriptures. Other great witnesses who preceded him, he said, were St. Paul, St. John, Arlus, Waldo, Wycliff, and Martin Luther. He had al-

ways been an amateur Bible student; now he became a professional by setting himself up as an inspired teacher of others. He must have been persuasive, for not only did he get others to accept his wild interpretations of the Bible, but corroboration from outside also; he even hauled in the great pyramid which, he said, confirmed the truth of his prophecies. By measuring the pyramid he arrived at the date, 1914, for the Lord's coming.

The millennial kingdom of happiness on earth was his ace and it came to be known as the theocracy. But before Christ was to set it up, Armageddon must take place: Christ would descend with an army of 144,000 and put to route world governments, religions and all institutions identified as instruments of Satan. Those who had died since the world began would then be recreated and given another test. If they passed it, they would live forever in the theocracy; if not, they would be annihilated. Life would be pleasant in the kingdom with elements of the ancient kingdom of the Jews and material enticements such as would delight the heart of a twentieth century American.

As Russell's visions enlarged, he made some changes in the Christian inheritance. The trinity disappeared, and Christ became the Archangel Michael destined one day somehow to be divinized and made one with Jehovah. The soul ceased to be immortal, since sinners would be annihilated; in fact he taught that there is no soul distinct from the body. When one dies he goes into a kind of sleep or else floats about in the upper air waiting invisibly with Christ to descend and do battle with the seed of Satan. The Church is a whim of Satan and an idolatrous concept. Only when Christ comes again will His kingdom exist.

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Russell probably gathered most of his followers from disillusioned Seventh Day Adventists. To this day they are from the down-trodden classes and those weary and frustrated with injustice, though it is said that there are many Christian characters among them. Less than one per cent, however, have any education beyond high school. Russell himself was no saint, and least of all to his wife. She charged him with philandering and divorced him. He sold "miracle wheat" which would bring a ripe harvest in the days of the coming kingdom, and he was once exposed in a court room for claiming to be able to interpret the Bible in its original language when he could not even read a line of Greek. It must be remembered, of course, that the Witnesses hold that Christ has done away not only with the ceremonial of the Old Testament, but even with the moral law laid down there. Perhaps that is why Mickey Spillane, one of their most noted converts, happens to be one of the most immoral writers of our day. At the same time they cling to some of the ceremonial customs of the Jews as authority for refusing to salute the flag of their country, to be vaccinated, to have blood transfusions, etc. Russell did not live to see the establishment of the kingdom. He died in 1916, two years after Christ was due and, according to the Witnesses, had appeared invisibly.

Since Russell's day the title of "pastor" has not been popular among the Witnesses. They claim to be ministers of the Gospel when it is possible thus to avoid compulsory military service, but otherwise they prefer to look on themselves as militant witnesses and they berate clergymen in general as frauds. Since the final judgment of the world is their key doctrine, it is natural that they should look for a judge

to be their leader. There was one waiting in the wings, though he was actually in jail at the time for inciting others to avoid the draft in the first world war. His name was Judge Rutherford, as shrewd an operator as ever sold stocks in the kingdom. He was destined to become the second prophet of the movement.

Though the title to his judgeship is clouded and he seems to have obtained it without much formal law schooling somewhere in Senator Claghorn's country, he had what was more important for his office, the bearing and dignity to go with the title. Tall, broad, commanding, with a deep, full voice, there was a touch of genius about him; though he did not originate the movement, he put it on its feet. Never was he to make Russell's mistakes; indeed, after his release from jail he never made his own mistake again. His life became very mysterious; his appearances in public rare and then in circumstances of great eclat. It was the judge who really organized the movement; under him the publishing house at Bethel in Brooklyn grew, and in California he set up magnificent Bethany as a place of abode for Christ and his saints when they arrived on earth.

"Millions now living will never die," said Rutherford, and this came to be known as his gimmick. Since Christ was due any day now, naturally many would never see death, for life in the kingdom would go on forever. It was Rutherford's genius that thought up the name "Jehovah's Witnesses." He was practical enough to throw out the great pyramid as a measure of the time of the second coming. This caused some dissension, for many Witnesses had grown fond of it, though many others were embarrassed by having a piece of pagan masonry made to stand

witness to prophecy.

The judge cleared away many of his predecessor's false prophecies. Russell had said that 1914 would not only mark Christ's visible coming, but many other dramatic events described in the pages of Scripture. The new prophet managed to blur the definiteness of Russell's predictions so that they were always somewhere in the future. His own public appearances were rare but electrifying: to assist at a mass baptism in a municipal swimming pool; to take part in the annual communion gathering at which all active members are to be present. Rutherford would march in at the head of his cohorts, who surrounded him bearing canes. He gave world broadcasts; he was one of the first to speak over vast radio networks and to pay vast sums for the privilege. In so doing he never failed to give the organizations of Satan a merciless going over.

Later on the Witnesses would carry his speeches from door to door and listeners, willing or unwilling, were treated to repetitions ad nauseam. Unfortunately for the movement, Rutherford was not one of the millions who would never die. He was laid out in state in Bethany in the year 1942, but no one who knew Rutherford doubted that, if he could have spoken, he would have given a good explanation of his death.

The judge left a going concern to his followers, one with a distinctive American character. That character is to be found not in its doctrines or its spirit, but in its high pressure salesmanship methods of putting across its message. The headquarters are in a seven story apartment building in Brooklyn; there publishers and printers toil from seven-thirty in the morning to 10:30 at night with scarcely a let-up. Presses pour out reams of printed

matter; books like "The Kingdom is at Hand," magazines and pamphlets like "Watchtower" and "Consolation" are printed and sold by the millions. From the headquarters crew captains rush them out to the canvassers. These methodically fan out over the districts visiting each home with the simple-minded zeal of salesmen convinced that each piece of literature sold is a ticket to Armageddon and the privilege not only of being in the cheering section but on the winning side.

The present prophet, Nathan H. Knorr, is a Babbitt-like, de-personalized business man who worked himself up from shipping clerk in Bethel to head of the board of directors. The judge was a man of mystery, but Knorr is clothed in almost complete silence. Probably the Witnesses will never again have the colorful leadership of men like Russell and Rutherford, but what they lack in color today they make up for in business efficiency. The group which paradoxically opposes all organizations of churches and governments has become a machine, geared like the daily press to clarion forth the approach of Armageddon.

Publicity always helps the Witnesses, and their best publicity has come from their court cases. They have a legal tradition of long standing; for their aggressive manner of preaching the gospel brings them into frequent brushes with the law. Their founder himself spent many a day in the court room, and Judge Rutherford, in underworld parlance, "beat a rap" of twenty years only by a technicality of law. Since then they have had frequent recourse to the law. One exasperated federal judge noted how they avoid jury duty, the draft, and almost all cooperation in community affairs, but at the least provocation rush into the protecting arms of the law. He suggested as ad-

vice to posterity that the Jehovah's Witnesses are not to be approached "with ordinary rules governing logic."

A typical case occurred early in New Hampshire. There one of the Witnesses, a farmer, refused on grounds of conscience to permit his child to be vaccinated. The school board would not budge; the boy could not attend class; the farmer was fined for keeping his son out of school and refused to pay the fine. The upshot was that the Witness spent 236 days in jail and the boy grew up without schooling. At the present time the courts are likely to become embroiled in cases involving blood transfusions. The Jews of old were forbidden to "eat blood" and the Witnesses won't eat it even when it comes through the veins. One district court judge in Chicago ordered the welfare department to take a baby from its parents and give it a transfusion necessary to save its life, despite the opposition of the parents. In Massachusetts the lower court ruled against a Witness who insisted on sending her children out daily to distribute literature from house to house; she was declared guilty of breaking the child labor law.

Still, the most important victories have gone to the Witnesses when they appealed to the supreme court. States that have tried to regulate their preaching and disseminating of inflammable literature by requiring a license have usually lost in the court of last appeal. The Witnesses' victory in the flag salute case was really triumphant. Several states had passed laws requiring children in school to pledge their allegiance to the flag each morning. The Witnesses objected, first, because the flag was a graven image, second, because saluting the flag was a religious service, and third, because a person saluting the flag worshipped the state and

ascribed salvation to it. In Massachusetts, children of Witnesses were sent to reform school for refusing to salute the flag. The same thing happened in Pennsylvania. This was in 1935; in 1938 the supreme court ruled against the children by a vote of 8 to 1; but in 1942 some of the members of the court did a complete somersault and said they had been wrong and reversed the decision.

Every sincere Christian must see in the spread of this sect an unrelieved tragedy. Since it attracts those least capable of guiding themselves, it is a prime example of the "blind leading the blind." It has no discernible life of worship, does not inspire humility, a sense of sin, the need of God's grace, nor does it arouse souls to a life of private prayer. From the work of saving their souls, which Christ says profits more than gaining the whole world, it turns the aspirations of hapless souls to a non-existent kingdom on this earth. In place of Christian charity, it inspires hatred, strife, detraction and sedition. All this it does in the name of private interpretation of the Bible.

Is there, then, nothing to be learned from the Witnesses? Indeed there is, for all heretical sects illustrate something of the truth taken out of its setting and carried to extremes. What the Witnesses illustrate is the importance of the lay apostolate. By confirmation all Christians are made witnesses for Christ. No need is greater in the Church today, recent Popes have said again and again, than apostolic men and women in every parish. Yet the zeal of many Catholics is put to shame by the fervor with which the duped Witnesses try to pass on their fantastic doctrines to all their neighbors.

Moreover the Witnesses have done some service to the cause of religious freedom by their legal victories. They

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have provided occasions for the clarifying of the rights of conscience of all citizens. But it has always been made clear that freedom of conscience is not absolute license. Were the Witnesses to continue the tactics of Judge Rutherford in inciting sedition as he did in the second world war, it is doubtful that the clock of freedom of conscience would save them. One feels

also that if the Witnesses should ever grow large in number and begin to permeate a large segment of society with their anti-government tactics, restrictive measures would be sanctioned. For, in this country, while religious observance is not a universal practice, patriotism is; and, as Finley Peter Dunne once said: "The supreme court also reads the election returns."



For Wives and Husbands Only

D. F. Miller

Forced Contraception

Problem: From two different sources I have recently heard a *Liguorian* article quoted to the effect that contraceptives may be used in a marriage if it is necessary to save the marriage because of the quarrels and cruelty the one partner may be guilty of if the other does not consent to the use of contraceptives. *The Liguorian* has always spoken out clearly on these matters, and a clear statement now might do away with such misunderstandings. Am I not correct in saying that no reason justifies the use of contraceptives?

Solution: Since birth-control in any form is essentially evil and contrary to the unchangeable natural law, no husband or wife may ever deliberately choose to practice it for any reason whatsoever. However there is a possible case in which one partner to a marriage, while by no means choosing to take part in a contraceptive action, is not guilty of serious sin in reluctantly permitting a wrong action of the partner. This case is referred to by Pope Pius XI in his encyclical on marriage in these words: "Holy Church knows well that not infrequently one of the parties is sinned against rather than sinning, when for a grave cause he or she reluctantly allows the perversion of the right order. In such a case, there is no sin, provided that, mindful of the law of charity, he or she does not neglect to dissuade and deter the partner from sin."

Thus if a husband were to use the contraceptive method known as "withdrawal" against his wife's wishes, or if a wife were to use a contraceptive douche immediately after the marriage right, there would be no sin on the part of the one who was opposed to these practices provided that one truly endeavored to persuade the other not to commit the sin. Let it be noted that there is no question of consenting to the evil practice, but only of permitting it, with remonstrances, for a grave reason. If, however, a husband or wife should wish to use contraceptive devices that would pervert the marriage act from the very beginning, then the other should refuse ever to permit this for any reason short of being forced under threat of death or a similarly grave fate.

Pre-Marriage Clinic

D. F. Miller

How to Judge a Boy Friend's Conversion

Problem: How is it possible to be sure that a boy friend, in becoming a convert to the Catholic Church, is truly sincere in his conversion and not merely "going through the motions" for the sake of marriage? I went out with this boy for a while, liked him quite a lot, but finally told him I would have to stop seeing him because I was determined never to marry anyone but a Catholic. Almost at once he said: "Then I'll become a Catholic." I have seen similar cases in which the converted person turned out to be anything but a decent Catholic after marriage. I don't want that to happen in my case. My boy friend is taking instructions, but how can I be sure he is sincere?

Solution: This is a very practical and important problem because there have indeed been many cases in which a boy went through all the requirements for becoming a Catholic, but turned out later to have done so only for the sake of "getting the girl." On the other hand it must be remembered that sincere converts make the best Catholics of all, and a Catholic girl should be very happy over the prospect of marrying such a man.

There are certain signs of sincerity in one who is taking instructions to become a Catholic that the girl should look for. She should, if at all possible, accompany him to the instructions he receives from the priest, both to give him confidence and to watch their effect on him. If he is sincere in his study of the faith, he will show it in three ways: 1) By asking questions both of the priest who instructs him and of his girl friend. A man who goes through a whole course of instructions without ever asking a question or raising a doubt, is probably not really interested in the faith at all. 2) By commenting to his girl friend on the new things he is learning and on their wonderful appeal to his mind. If a man takes instructions to become a Catholic and never has a word to say about their effect on him, he cannot be very sincere. 3) By showing a new interest in prayer and church services within a short time after beginning to take instructions. True conversions are always marked by sincere prayers and a quickening desire to enter into the life of the Church. A man who would go through an entire course of instructions and never of his own accord go to Mass or any other Catholic church service until after his reception into the church, would offer evidence of indifference to the whole thing. One final thing that a girl should do: she should bring up moral problems that being a Catholic raises in one's life and see how her boy friend would solve them. If he balks, for instance, at the Catholic principle concerning birth-control, and holds out against it, he is not sincerely converted.

Readers Retort

In which readers are invited to speak their mind about views and opinions expressed in *The Liguorian*. All letters must be signed and full address of writer must be given, though city and initials of letter-writers will be withheld from publication on request.

New York, N. Y.

"I have been reading THE LIGUORIAN for about two years, and for the most part I find it an excellent Catholic magazine. I must say, however, that once in a while you seem to go off on something that makes me look at the cover to see if I am still reading the same magazine. One such was your attack on Westbrook Pegler several months ago. A far worse mistake of fact appeared in your November, 1952, issue in which, in answer to a letter-writer, you stated: 'Corporal punishment is so frowned on and so seldom used in Catholic schools today that it was not even in our mind when we spoke of a child being punished in school.' As a graduate of both a Catholic grammar and high school, and a personal friend of many who still attend such schools, I can say that this is the most outlandish statement I have ever read. As a matter of fact, when reading it I could not help laughing out loud. I can definitely state that corporal punishment is not only used but used extensively in the Catholic grammar and high schools of New York City. I am not arguing either for or against such punishment. It would take a book, not a letter, to discuss the pros and cons. But I do say you should exercise better judgment than to make statements that are so obviously wrong. In doing so you hold your magazine and the Church up to ridicule.

T. C."

Whatever may be the local experience of an individual, we know (and we have traveled extensively through the country) that corporal punishment is far more frowned upon and less used today than it was forty years ago, so much so that it can be called

by comparison a rarity. Any suggestion that it is very common or overdone today would make anyone who is at least fifty years old laugh out loud, in remembrance of the good old days.

The editors

Manila, P. I.

"I got a shock last night when I read THE LIGUORIAN for October, 1952. On page 652, your writer makes a stupendous historical misstatement that seems unpardonable in a magazine of such high calibre as yours. He says that 'eight hundred years ago the University of Bonn, Germany, counted among its professors, Gratian.' Now the fact is that the University of Bonn was founded in the 18th century, and Gratian could not have taught there unless he rose from the dead. I suppose your writer was thinking of Bologna, Italy, where Gratian had been teaching.

G. K., S.V.D."

Stupendous is the word for this mistake. The news item referred to was taken from a foreign language European publication, and the writer made the slip of translating "Bononiensis" as "Bonn" instead of Bologna. We are grateful for the chance to make the correction publicly.

The editors

Hannibal, N. Y.

"I am a constant reader of THE LIGUORIAN and greatly appreciate all the information I receive from it. There is one question I need to have answered however. I am always at a loss to explain to my non-Catholic friends how it is possible for so many Catholic actresses and actors to re-

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marry after divorce. Loretta Young is one example. Maureen O'Sullivan is another. I know there must be an explanation, but I would surely like to be able to give it to my friends. Have you published anything on this?

Mrs. B. C. E."

In THE LIGUORIAN for May, 1951, an article was published that presented all the principles covering cases of marriage annulments by the Catholic Church. Every last copy of that issue of THE LIGUORIAN was sold or given away on request, but the article is about to appear in five-cent pamphlet form under the title "Can the Catholic Church Annul Any Marriages?" Every Catholic should know the principles presented in this pamphlet, and how they may apply to individual cases in which prominent Catholics are permitted a second marriage after a divorce.

The editors

Anon

"I have been a reader of THE LIGUORIAN for a long time and enjoy it very much. However, the article on 'How rhythm is justified' on page 750 in the December issue has me puzzled. It states that the mere fact of having a certain number of children does not justify a husband and wife in deciding to use rhythm continually thereafter unless there be a serious reason. In the May 3, 1952, issue of *America*, an article appeared by Rev. Gerald Kelly, S.J., teacher of moral theology at St. Mary's College, Kansas, on the subject, in which he differentiates between doing one's duty and rendering a service beyond the call of duty. He states that further justifying reasons for the use of rhythm are no longer needed after the duty of providing for the conservation of the race has been fulfilled. Citing authorities on the number of children required in a marriage to take care of the common good, he concludes: 1) to have more than four or five children is an ideal; 2) to use rhythm to limit one's family to four or five children

is permissible without any other reason, provided both partners are willing and able to practice it; 3) to use rhythm to limit one's family to less than four children requires a serious justifying reason. Apparently you differ from this view. Is the matter so controversial that either opinion may be followed?

Anon"

We were aware of the article by Father Kelly when we wrote the item referred to, and were expressing an opinion contrary to his, as other theologians have done. We give two reasons for our view. The first is the fact that Pope Pius XII, when he set out expressly to speak about the justifying reasons for rhythm, said absolutely nothing about the number of children in a family constituting such a reason. He stressed special reasons only, of an economic, hygienic, medical or social nature. The second reason is that it is impossible to establish a permanent standard of what constitutes parents' duty to society. In areas that good scientists call "overpopulated," would parents be justified on that score to limit their children to one, or to have none by the use of rhythm? In underpopulated areas would they be bound to try to have ten? We cannot see that any definite standard can be set down on the basis of "duty to society." We do recognize that in a vast number of cases in which four or five children have already been born, one of the special reasons spoken of by the Pope is present. But it is our opinion that such a reason must be present, not contained in the mere fact of having had four or five children.

The editors

Cincinnati, O.

"Just finished browsing through the latest LIGUORIAN, a magazine that I think should be in the hands of every Catholic in the country. My attention was especially fixed on a subject that happens to be 'my baby.' Since my appointment as assistant archdiocesan youth director, I have been designated

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moderator of the original SDS chapter started here in Cincinnati. Knowing the entire history of the organization and working closely with the girls, I can understand how easily these young people can become discouraged by reason of lack of appreciation and assistance from adults. Your B. W., from Read Island, (Readers Retort, Jan.) is a typical example of many adult minds, raising defense mechanisms against youthful attempts to put into practice principles learned in school. From the SDS history we find that it was begun in high school religion class by the girls themselves, and has since been governed by high school girls, at least here in Cincinnati where it originated. A priest moderator is appointed, but to prove that he does not overpower the girls with his "dualistic" ideals, I can attest that it is the girls themselves who make the decisions, sometimes after the moderator has presented more lenient opinions to them. The opposition to SDS is one of the signs of the prevalence of secularism. Put a Catholic out of school into the world and for about six months he is shocked at the dress, actions, etc., of the world. But gradually his Catholic background fades and the time comes when his standards are gone and he wonders why other Catholics are so narrow-minded, e.g., in matters such as the SDS modesty rules. He has become completely secularized.

Rev. C. J. B."

This should be the final answer to those who have been thinking that old fogies and scrupulous priests have been dictating the rules of modesty lined up under the SDS campaign. It is the girls themselves who make the rules, and older Catholics should un-secularize themselves and give a helping hand to the youngsters.

The editors

Chicago, Ill.

"We are most grateful for your splendid retorts to objecting readers on the subject of SDS. We have just had a revised form of

the crusade leaflet printed and feel that you will want to see it. Next week we are having an SDS week in the Chicago high schools for girls. Each girl will be supplied with an individual copy of the standards and a campaign button. Before too long we shall release a report to the nation.

Rev. T. L. O.S.A.

Copies of the new folder on the SDS modesty program can be had by anyone who wishes to write to CISCA, 31 E. Congress St., Chicago 5, Ill.

The editors

Chicago, Ill.

"Expression in words of my appreciation for THE LIGUORIAN is impossible. Being a convert, and therefore needing to learn more and more about the Church and her teachings through books and magazines, I have read a great deal but have come to the conclusion that THE LIGUORIAN is the outstanding magazine for helping converts to know and understand their religion. Even many of my Catholic friends find it instructive and helpful for their task of leading Catholic lives. I pray that God will continue to give you the grace to help the many of us who now profit by THE LIGUORIAN.

D. J. S."

We have always believed that personal reading should follow or accompany the course of instructions a person receives in becoming a Catholic. We appreciate every testimonial to the effect that THE LIGUORIAN is ideal for this purpose.

The editors

Wilmington, Dela.

"THE LIGUORIAN does a wonderful job of utilizing every bit of space, even the back cover, to bring the true Church of God with all its teachings — popular or not — into the home. Yet it does so in a truly wholesome, enriching and elevating manner. Do not change it a bit. This magazine fills the exact needs of those who want it and do read it.



Test of Character

L. M. Merrill

The Extremist

People who go to extremes in the face of advice or correction or obedience or punishment are always a trial to those with whom they are associated. They use extremism as a way of getting back at the one who corrected them in any way, and thus nullify every iota of good that was intended. Examples will illustrate what is meant by this extremism.

One friend happens to say to another, half-jokingly but with a tiny element of friendly correction: "You talk too much." The one corrected immediately goes into a great silence. He refuses to talk at all. He remains silent for days. He knows that this will hurt his friend far more than the talking too much that was lightly criticized. He does it in order to hurt, and of course succeeds in his purpose.

A husband remarks to his wife, after she has related a doubtfully true but vicious story about somebody, that it would be better for them not to gossip about such things. She takes offense, and also retaliatory measures. She won't tell him any news, about anybody. If he asks a question about somebody he is interested in, she replies that it would be gossip to talk, and refuses to give any information.

Children often use the trick of going to extremes under correction; indeed, it is basically a childish manoeuvre. A child may be rebuked for playing with matches; he retaliates by refusing to play with anything. A child is forbidden to go to a certain party; he refuses to go to any party for a good period of time thereafter. A child is commanded not to leave his own yard when he wants to go to a neighbor's home. He shows his hurt by refusing to go out of the house at all.

There is no way of correcting this fault without convincing the one who commits it that his pride is behind every effort he makes to get back at someone who corrects him by carrying the correction to extremes. He is really saying, through his unreasonable conduct: "I'll show you. I'll make you sorry you ever corrected me. I'll make you plead with me to be decent again."

The best treatment for such conduct is to ignore it; to act as if you did not notice it; to make no accusation or appeal. If the person is not too far sunk in his own pride, he will in a short time realize the foolishness of his conduct and begin to act reasonably again. It is our hope that those who are conscious of having gone to extremes to get back at somebody for correcting them will catch themselves before they fall into this ugly fault again.

Portrait of Christ

Few biographical details are known about most of the apostles. But what is known and what has been handed down is fascinating evidence of the love of Christ for rich and poor.

R. J. Miller

NOT ALL of Our Lord's apostles were poor men. Some of them, as we have seen, were rather of the "solid citizen" type, or even actually wealthy: Sts. Peter and Andrew, James and John, Matthew and possibly Philip and Bartholomew.

What, now, of the rest of the twelve? What about Sts. James the Less, Simon and Jude, Thomas and Mathias?

In their case we do find poverty; such is the showing of evidence that can be gathered from the New Testament and ancient tradition.

The evidence, as far as the New Testament is concerned, does not amount to a great deal it is true. But we have enough to stimulate our curiosity, at least; and there is nothing wrong, in fact it is an edifying occupation, to exercise in moderation the human function of curiosity in regard to a pious subject like the personality and way of life of the twelve apostles. Our divine Lord in His Providence has seen fit to give us so very little definite information on the matter that He could almost be taken to be offering an invitation or a challenge to our pious curiosity.

In moderation, then, let us take up the challenge and see what we can discover on the poverty of at least some of the twelve apostles.

First, there is St. James the Less. He is one of the twelve who had a blood brother for an apostle, namely St. Jude. (The other pairs of brothers are Sts. Peter and Andrew, and

Sts. James the Greater and St. John.) But St. James the Less had still another blood relation among the twelve apostles, namely, his cousin St. Simon.

He is also the author of one of the books of the New Testament: the Epistle of St. James. And he is mentioned a number of times in the Acts of the Apostles and in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians.

In the Acts of the Apostles, chapter twelve, we read that after St. Peter had been miraculously released from prison in Jerusalem by an angel, he found a little group of Christians in the upper room and bade them:

Tell James and the brethren about this,

and then secretly left the city.

Later, as related in chapter fifteen of the Acts, the apostles and other leaders of the faithful met again in Jerusalem to discuss the then burning question of whether new Christians had to be circumcised. "After there had been much disputing," St. Peter got up and settled the matter: no circumcision. When he finished speaking "the whole crowd was silent." All that remained was to suggest some practical ways of carrying out the ruling of the head of the Church, St. Peter; and it was St. James who arose and made the practical suggestions.

Ancient tradition, in keeping with these indications from the Holy Bible, holds that St. James was the first bishop of Jerusalem. He is also regarded as the author of the first rite

for the celebration of Holy Mass; the "Jacobite" Rite, from which the present Greek and other Eastern rites are derived. According to a tradition in some of the Eastern Churches, it was St. James who celebrated the first Mass after the Last Supper. This occurred, it is believed, on the Thursday after Pentecost Sunday; and the date is still honored as a feast in some of the Eastern Rites.

The Roman Breviary on his feast day, May 1, carries this account of his life:

From his earliest youth he drank no wine nor fermented liquor, abstained from meat, never cut his hair or beard, used no perfume, and never visited the public baths. His clothes were linen. From constant prayer the skin of his knees had become so hardened that it resembled a camel's hide. When he was ninety-six years old, after thirty years of saintly rule over the church of Jerusalem, he was first pelted with stones, then carried to the pinnacle of the temple, and cast down from there.

This account dates back many centuries, of course, and although not from the age of St. James himself, it bears witness in general, at least, to his extraordinarily poor manner of life.

One item in particular calls for comment. If he was ninety-six years old when he died, and had been bishop of Jerusalem for thirty years, it would follow that when Our Lord had called him to be an apostle he was already more than sixty years old. On this basis he certainly should enjoy the distinction of being the oldest of the little group around Our Lord.

Only there is a certain difficulty here: St. Mark the Evangelist in his Gospel states that among the holy

women who remained faithful to Our Lord on Calvary there was "Mary the mother of James the Less." It is possible, of course, that a vigorous old octogenarian may have had her place in that heroic group of women on Calvary, though perhaps not very probable. Even if difficult, however, we should like to believe it; the heroism of such a mother would tend to account for the hardy, devoted life of her son.

But how does all this bear on the question of whether St. James was a poor man?

First of all, as a relative of Our Lord, it is most likely that he shared the poverty of Christ's early life. We have mentioned, too, in a previous article, the story of how some relatives of Our Lord were brought before the Emperor Domitian as belonging to the family of a man Who claimed royal distinction; and how the Emperor, when he saw their calloused workman's hands, dismissed them mockingly: "I see no royalty here!"

His Epistle gives us even clearer evidence on his own poverty. The author of that Epistle writes like anything but a member of the wealthy class:

Go to now, you rich men!

(note: "*You rich men*");

Weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Corruption has rotted your wealth. All the fine clothes are moth-eaten and the gold and silver are covered with rust. That rust will bear witness against you, and bite into your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourselves wrath against the Last Day!

Then of course there is the brevi-

ary account of his life. An expert in ancient lore might question the accuracy of some of the details; for instance, it seems that in Our Lord's time—and in St. James's—it was not customary to pray kneeling, but standing (meaning that the item in the breviary account about the knees "like a camel's hide" date from a later period, when kneeling had replaced standing as the usual posture for prayer; but the general underlying fact remains that St. James has been regarded from the earliest Christian times as leading a life of extreme poverty and mortification.

Strangely enough, the Church does not celebrate the feast of this great apostle by himself alone; May 1st is the feast of "Sts. Philip and James." Associated with him is a fellow apostle who had almost nothing in common with him in life; and whose name is now placed before his own on their common feast day.

St. James was the oldest of the apostles; St. Philip, to judge by his boyish questions and answers, one of the youngest. St. James was the apostle of the Jews in his way of life and in his long years as bishop of Jerusalem; St. Philip wandered far and wide among the Gentiles preaching the Gospel. St. James was Jewish in his very name; St. Philip's name is Greek. St. James had no fellow-apostle as his companion in preaching the Gospel, not even his brother St. Jude or his cousin St. Simon; St. Philip's constant companion, according to ancient tradition, was St. Bartholomew. There is no indication that St. James ever married, rather the contrary; St. Philip is reported to have been a married man with three daughters. And while St. James lived the poorest life of any of the twelve, St. Philip seems rather to have been among the

apostles who were better off in this world's goods. They were not associated even in their dying; St. James was martyred at Jerusalem, St. Philip at Hierapolis in Egypt.

And yet these two men, so different at every point, are now linked forever in the Church's life and worship. They have the same feast day, May 1st; and they share a common tomb in Rome. Even their tomb in Rome, however, has its intriguing paradox: the church where they lie buried is not the church of St. James and St. Philip, or of Sts. Philip and James, but "the Church of the Twelve Apostles."

Here is mystery, to be sure. On the one hand, it is certain that Sts. James and Philip are now closely associated in heaven. "Whatsoever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven," the very fact of their common veneration by Christ's Church is an indication of some specially close relationship given them by Christ in heaven. But what can they have in common, what bond can there possibly be between them as individual and individualistic saints in heaven after their being so widely separated, almost so completely different, on earth?

This mysterious heavenly friendship is surely not without its good reasons in the designs of the Master of the Apostles. And while we can hardly hope to probe it completely until we too share the heavenly viewpoint of Sts. James and Philip, there is one suggestion of an explanation to be found even before we come to enjoy that glorious light. It lies in Christ's own attitude to rich and poor. He loved the poor; but He loved many a rich person too. What he looked to in His friends was not primarily poverty or wealth, but the generous heart. A poor man, generous in faith

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and devotion, could be His friend; a rich man capable of defying the conventions of his class and giving himself wholeheartedly to His service would not be denied that friendship either. St. James was the poor man; St. Philip represented the rich; and Jesus loved them both, as they both loved Him. Their friendship in heaven is a divine sign given to rich and poor of the one ultimate common ground they can find together: namely, friendship for Jesus Christ.

So much for St. James the Less. His brother, St. Jude, we are entitled to suppose, shared his poverty; although St. Jude's companion on his apostolic journeys was not his brother but his cousin, St. Simon; and their feast is celebrated together on October 28. St. Jude is also called Thaddeus, which the interpreters tell us means either "barrel-chested" or "big-hearted"—perhaps both. He also wrote an epistle which has its place among the books of the New Testament; and which (strangely enough at first sight) is only a kind of summary or paraphrase of St. Peter's second epistle. Without wishing to push the matter too far, we may conjecture that there too we have a sign of limited education and literary gifts: his first efforts in the way of written apostolic exhortation being something like preaching another man's sermon—one originally delivered by a more gifted fellow apostle.

At the last supper, however, St. Jude asked a question of Our Lord (the only words spoken by him that are recorded in the Gospel). Our Lord had just said:

He that loveth Me shall be loved by My
Father;
and I will love him;
and will manifest Myself to him.

Then St. Jude spoke up and asked:

Lord, how are You going to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?

It was the question of a plain, blunt man, but it gave occasion for the revelation of one of the most profound and wonderful truths of Christianity, namely that of the indwelling of the Holy Trinity in the souls of the just. Our Lord's answer was:

If anyone love Me, he will keep

My word;

and My Father will love him;

and *We will come to him, and will make our abode with him.*

Then, finally, St. Jude is well known and loved in the Church by rich and poor alike, and despite the obscurity and poverty of his earthly life, as the saint of the impossible.

St. Simon was the cousin of Sts. James and Jude, and also of our divine Lord Himself. But St. Simon might be called the mystery man of the twelve. He is the only one of the original band from whom we have not a single word, either spoken or written. St. Mathias is another silent apostle, but he was taken into the sacred group only after the treason of Judas.

St. Simon is called the "Zealot" or the "Cananean"—names which we are told mean both the same thing, namely a man very conscientious and strict about the law.

Ancient tradition has some interesting stories about St. Simon. He is considered by the Greeks, Copts, and Ethiopians to have been the same person as the Nathanael spoken of in the first and last chapter of St. John's Gospel. This Nathanael is something of a mystery man too, appearing thus at the beginning and the end of the Gospel story, and nowhere else. But tradition in the Latin Church

rather identifies Nathanael with the apostle St. Bartholomew.

The ancient Greek writers went even farther; they also identified their Simon-Nathanael with the bridegroom of the wedding feast at Cana. This pious piece of detective work, however, is a little hard to accept. For it seems very strange for Our Lord to have sanctified the married state by His presence and His first public miracle at Cana, and then to have asked the young couple to separate with his apostolic invitation: "Leave all things!"—wife and all. He did just that, of course, for other married men, and it was perfectly all right for Him to do so too; but while the Greeks may hold what they please, to our western minds it hardly seems that Cana was the place for such an invitation.

As for his apostolic journeys, St. Simon is the one apostle who is credited with having preached the Gospel in ancient Britain, the England of today.

As to his poverty, while we have extremely little to go on, still the meagre evidence does point rather to a poor man than otherwise. As a cousin of Sts. James and Jude and a cousin of Our Lord Himself, the first supposition would be that he shared their poverty.

St. Thomas the Apostle is called "Didymus" or "the Twin." And this is a strange thing: he is the only "twin" among the apostles, and yet with all the pairs of brothers in the group, there is no mention whatsoever of St. Thomas's twin brother!

St. Thomas would have been a hard twin to keep up with, however. The ancient stories and legends make him out to be the greatest traveler in all that holy traveling fraternity, the twelve apostles. One very definite

tradition has him preaching in India, and another somewhat less certain puts him in Mexico—the only apostle to have reached the American continent.

To judge by his words as recorded in the Gospel, he was a rather outspoken and obstinate character, though also strangely inconsistent. In St. John's eleventh chapter when there was a question of danger to Our Lord's life, St. Thomas spoke up with a brave man's profession of heroic faith and devotion:

Let us go along so that we can die with Him!

But then when the passion came, he too "fled" with the other apostles; and after Our Lord's resurrection, he is the famous obstinate "unbelieving Thomas."

Our interest here in the poverty of the apostles might suggest a solution of this strange inconsistency. Suppose that St. Thomas was somehow poorer than the average among the apostles, but still a hardheaded, determined man. Would it not be likely—and is it not more or less a matter of common experience—that such a man in such a situation, to offset the disadvantage or inferiority he feels because of his poverty, should on occasion assert himself strongly or even obstinately in the face of the crowd or even against the crowd?

In that supposition, St. Thomas's obstinacy and even his inconsistency would be indications that he belonged to the less prosperous of the apostles.

Last of all we have St. Mathias. We have not a word that he ever uttered or wrote. We do not even have any distinguishing surname for him, like St. Simon "the Cananean." When,

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after the resurrection, there was question of electing a successor to Judas Iscariot, the final choice was found to lie between St. Mathias and Joseph "the Just." Evidently St. Mathias had no special traits or gifts that would merit particular attention.

What are we to say of the worldly position of so humanly undistinguished an apostle? Surely it would seem reasonable to suppose or conclude that in his case poverty rather than anything else is indicated by the record, or the lack of record.

Briefly, then, in summary, our investigation into what may be called the "financial status" of the apostles has shown in the first place, and perhaps most surprising of all, that not all of them were poor. St. Paul the

Apostle and St. Matthew were rather wealthy men. Among the others, Sts. Peter and Andrew, James the Greater and John, Philip and Bartholomew, were at least "financially independent," and possibly very comfortably situated for their country and time. The rest: St. James the Less, Sts. Simon and Jude, St. Thomas and St. Mathias, were the poor men in the apostolic college.

Thus Our Lord is "not particular," as the phrase goes, about having His friends all from the really poorer classes of society. He delights rather in singling them out everywhere—we may say that He goes about stealing them from the rich and rescuing them from the poor.

The Indispensable

A little lad saying his night prayers points out that our trust must be in the name of the Lord. One night, while listening at the bedroom door, his mother heard him concluding in this way:

"God bless mom, God bless dad, and please take care of Yourself, God, because if anything happens to You, we're all sunk!"

New Greeting in the Capital

According to Cheslow T. Pendleton, the current salutation when old cronies meet on the streets of Washington, runs something like this:

"The greeting now in Washington is not Hello or How-de-do?

They don't ask, 'Are you having fun?' or if conditions make you blue.

They don't inquire about your folks, or if you're making any dough;

Or if you heard the latest jokes about a certain so and so.

They wait until no one is near, and while you wish you hadn't met,

They whisper hoarsely in your ear, 'Were YOU investigated yet?'"

Argentina now has a local tax on each door and window that shows what a ghastly mistake it was for man to come down out of the trees.

New Haven Register

Baby-sitters weren't needed back in the old days when there was one child in the family old enough to look after the other nine.

Boston Globe

Prods to Perfection

Quotations and anecdotes from real life, designed to foster virtues that should be second nature to the Christian.

J. P. Schaefer

THAT THE bodies of men may be properly developed and cared for, that the sufferings and sicknesses to which they fall heir may be successfully combatted, scientists are constantly pushing back the boundaries of human knowledge. And that the development of man's mind may be commensurate with that of his body, greater and more advanced institutions of learning are being built. But long before a child enters an institution of learning, the training of its mind and will, the influencing of its eternity, is limited to the care of but two people, its parents. To them belongs the great privilege and the tremendous responsibility of beginning their child's education for life and for eternity. That they may the better appreciate their privileges and more conscientiously fulfill their obligations, God grants to them the wonderful graces of the continuing sacrament of matrimony. That you parents may, perhaps, realize a bit more what a wonderful thing it is to influence and to direct a child's mind and life, what a disastrous thing it is not to influence and to direct them or to do so wrongly, we present here the following stories and incidents. We invite you to read them, slowly and reflectively, in the hope that they will influence you to better appreciate your wonderful duty and privilege.

Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, was once rebuked for his evil life by an old philosopher. Enraged, the

tyrant searched for a means of gratifying his desire for revenge. For a long time he searched the ingenuity of his evil mind in vain. But, at last, his cunning and cruel mind led him to seize the philosopher's son, not in order to kill or to torture him, but to deliver him into the care of a teacher notorious for his contempt of morality and religion. Even the tyrant must have been satisfied with the results, for the youth grew up to be a monster of wickedness, and brought the white-haired old philosopher in shame and sorrow to his grave.

A holy monk was one day reading the parable of the prodigal son to his brethren, when suddenly one of them said:

"That story is really beautiful, and it gives a fair picture of nearly the entire family. There are the tender and merciful father, the foolish and reckless youth, and the envious elder brother. But something is lacking in the story. We see no mother there."

"Ah, good brother," exclaimed the old monk, "if the mother of these boys had been alive at that time, the youngster, I assure you, would probably have remained at home."

A young man was about to suffer the death penalty for a crime which he had committed. At the door of his cell, his mother waited to bid him goodbye. The youth stood with no sign of emotion or affection while she embraced and kissed him, then

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turned and without a word to his mother walked at the side of the chaplain to the death-chamber.

"Father," he exclaimed, "do you know that that embrace is the first sign of affection ever shown me by my mother?"

The following line, written by the great poet John Milton, should be written into the mind and heart of every parent:

"The childhood shows the man as morning shows the day."

The philosopher, Aristippus, was once asked by a gentleman of noble rank how much he would ask for educating the nobleman's son.

"One thousand drachmas," replied the philosopher.

"That is an enormous sum," replied the nobleman. "Why for that much I can buy a slave."

"Buy him," replied the philosopher, "and you will have two, the slave and your son."

"One father is worth more than a hundred school-masters." (George Herbert.)

Henry IV, king of France, was one day chastising his son, who later was to be Louis XIII. The mother of the child, forced to behold the punishment, wept and begged Henry to stop. Henry did so, but exclaimed:

"You weep, Madame, because I

use a little severity in punishing your child. But the day will come when this prince will make you weep for the severity with which he will treat you."

Henry's prediction came true. At the king's death, the queen-mother was imprisoned in the palace, and later was driven from France and died in exile.

The famous Grecian philosopher used to say: "If I had permission I would stand at the highest point of the city and cry out: 'Whither are you hurrying, O men! Why are you so preoccupied with amassing wealth and so neglectful of your children to whom you are going to leave it?'"

This is the great privilege, the great vocation of your lives, parents, not only to join with God in bringing life into the world, but also to co-operate with Him through the graces which He grants you in the sacrament of matrimony in leading young souls to eternal life. But this is more than a privilege and a vocation. It is also a tremendous responsibility, one which parents may easily lose sight of in the monotonous, and sometimes hectic, routine of daily life. That it might be impressed a bit more, perhaps, upon your minds, we ask you to reread the preceding stories and incidents, to reflect seriously upon them and to apply your thoughts and conclusions to the serious training of your own children.

Lipstick on the Blarney Stone

"If I didn't purify old Blarney three times a day, you couldn't see the stone for the lipstick. It's drivin' me daft. All this scrubbin' is a job for the Missus. But I'm never lettin' her kiss the Blarney Stone. She talks enough already. They oughtn't to allow any lady to kiss the Blarney Stone unless she's wearing kiss-proof lipstick. Used to be a Latin inscription on the stone. But I've scrubbed that all away, getting the war paint off."

Voice from the Vatican

What Popes have said on topics of importance to the people of all times.

F. B. Bockwinkel

ONE OF THE most eloquent of the Holy Father's messages to the world was his lengthy message at Christmas 1952. It was beamed over the Vatican radio to the remotest parts of the globe. At least 24 languages were used to transmit the words of Christ's successor to Christ's children.

Hitting hard and often at one of the modern world's misconceptions Pope Pius XII scores the overemphasis of organization and production to the detriment of man's personal dignity, and the dependence of man upon machinery while forgetting his dependence upon God.

Pope Pius XII says: "The Christian Christmas is the sure hope of salvation. 'Lift up your heads, for your salvation is near.' (Luke 21, 18).

"We intend to make our own today this invitation to lift up your gaze to the sun of hope, as a father's greeting and wish to you all, beloved sons and daughters.

"But our wish and greeting is addressed before all others to the poor, to the oppressed, to those who for whatever reason sigh in affliction, and whose life depends, as it were, on the breath of hope which can be infused into them and the measure of help which can be procured for them.

"They are so very, very many, these beloved children! The sorrowful chorus of prayers and pleas for help—far from decreasing as the lapse of many years after the world conflict gave good reason to hope for—continues to become at times more intense on account of many and pressing wants. It rises towards us, it may be

said, from every part of the world, and rends our soul for all the distress and tears it reveals.

"One would say that humanity today, which has been able to build the marvelous complex machine of the modern world, subjugating to its service the tremendous forces of nature, now appears incapable of controlling these forces—as though the rudder has slipped from its hands—and so it is in peril of being overthrown and crushed by them. Such inability to control should of itself suggest to men who are its victims not to expect salvation solely from the technicians' production and organization. The work of these can help, and notably, to solve grave and expensive problems which afflict the world, only if it is bound up with and directed toward, bettering and strengthening true human values, but in no case—oh, how we wish that all; both on this continent and beyond the sea, would realize it—will it avail to fashion a world without misery.

"Meanwhile, in so urgent a problem as bringing help to souls in distress, humanity must raise its eyes to God, and learn always from His infinitely wise and efficacious action the way to help and redeem men from their ills. Now, here the mystery of the Nativity in particular casts a wonderful light. For in what else does the substance of this ineffable mystery consist but in the work undertaken by God and by Him gradually brought to its conclusion in aid of His creature, in order to lift him up again from the depths of the most grievous and general misery into which he had fallen?

We mean the misery of sin and of separation from the supreme good.

"Observe with humble and illuminating contemplation how God directs His work. Two fundamental concepts, one might say two laws, dictated by His infinite wisdom, rule and guide the execution of His plan of redemption, stamping it with an unmistakable character of harmony and efficacy, which are the mark of the Divine mode of operation.

"Above all, far from disturbing the pre-existing order set by Him in creation, God maintains steadfast the full force of those general laws which govern the world, as well as man's nature, shaken though this is by the infirmities it has contracted. In this order, which was also established for the salvation of the creature, He deranges nothing, He withdraws nothing from it, but He inserts a new element destined to perfect and surpass it. This element is grace, by whose supernatural light the creature can know that order better, and by whose superhuman force he can better observe it.

"In the second place, to render the general order efficacious in each particular case, each of which is different from all others, God establishes an immediate personal contact with man, effectuated in the mystery of the incarnation. In this mystery the second person of the Most Holy Trinity becomes man among men thus bridging as it were, the infinite distance which separates the helping majesty from the needy creature, and mutually harmonizing the immutable efficacy of general law with the personal exigencies of each one."

There the Holy Father has pointed out God's way of helping man to salvation. He adds to our nature a super-nature, the life of grace infused into the souls of men. He sends the second

person of the Trinity, the Son of God, into the world as a man to make personal contact with man. This is God's way of showing to man that his whole hope of salvation is dependent upon God. The true way of salvation marked out for creatures by the Creator, alas, has been forsaken. Men follow two false ways, says Pope Pius XII.

"They either attribute salvation to some order rigorously uniform and inflexible, embracing the whole world, to a system that ought to act with the certainty of a proven medicine, to a new social formula reduced to cold theoretic terms—or, on the other hand, rejecting such general prescriptions, they hope for salvation from the spontaneous forces of the natural instinct and, in the best hypothesis, from sentimental impulses of individuals and peoples, without troubling whether the overthrow of the existing order follows as a consequence, even though it is quite clear that salvation cannot be born of chaos.

"Both these ways are false, and so are far from reflecting the wisdom of God Who is the first and exemplary cause of the alleviation of misery. It is superstition to expect salvation from rigid formulas mathematically applied to the social order, for this attributes to them an almost prodigious power which they cannot have, while to place one's hopes exclusively in the creative forces of vital action of each individual is contrary to the designs of God Who is the Lord of order.

"We must answer that the impersonal character of such a world is contrary to the fundamentally personal nature of those institutions which the Creator has given to human society. In fact, marriage and the family, the state and private property

tend of their very nature to form man as a person, to protect and render him capable of contributing through his own voluntary co-operation and personal responsibility to the likewise personal life and development of human relations. The creative wisdom of God is therefore alien to that system of impersonal unity which strikes at the human person, who is origin and end of society and in the depths of His being an image

of his God."

The first Christmas found Christ's angelic messengers pointing out to the world that men of good will would have peace only after giving glory to God. And on the Christmas past Christ's Vicar recalls to our minds that salvation, happiness and peace depend upon our personal use of God's grace and the personal acceptance of Him whom He has sent.

Problems of Teen-agers

D. F. Miller

Unworthy Parents

Problem: Is a son or daughter obliged to honor a father who has been crude, selfish, irresponsible and cruel to one's mother? Is a son or daughter living in a state of constant mortal sin who cannot honor and respect such a parent?

Solution: The obligations imposed by the fourth commandment of God do not cease by reason of the sins that may have been committed by one's parents. These obligations are radically based on the fact that a child has received the gift of life through its parents, and to the end of its own life it owes them gratitude, love and respect, to be practiced as circumstances make possible.

It is very natural, however, that a son or daughter will become subject to an intense feeling of revulsion for a parent who has fallen into habits of drunkenness, cruelty, neglect of family and other evils. This feeling is not a sin for the simple reason that it cannot be avoided. Whenever a person comes face to face with evil in the character of another, a feeling of disgust and dislike is bound to arise.

But such feelings need not and must not interfere with the carrying out of the obligations of the fourth commandment, which are not to be based on the feelings but are subject to the will. A child is always bound to wish and pray for the good of its parents, and the worse off they are, the more fervent should be the wishes and prayers on their behalf. In fact it can be said with certainty that no matter how intense or violent are the feelings of disgust and dislike of a young person toward one of his parents because of the latter's sins, these do not become a sin so long as the young person continues to pray earnestly for the sinful parent.

We speak here only of the case in which the sins of a parent are especially flagrant and obvious. Sometimes young people permit dislike for one of their parents to take possession of them when there are no grounds for it except that they dislike the strictures of obedience. Of such cases we shall say more later on.

For Non-Catholics Only

F. M. Louis

Why Are Priests Necessary in Religion?

Objection: The purpose of all religion is to bring a person into communion with God. It seems to me to be clear that anybody can achieve this communion with God directly, and in a far more satisfying and effective manner than if he has to be dependent on priests or any other human instruments. Moreover, experience proves that many individuals who accept no church or ecclesiastical authority as representative of God, have achieved a high degree of prayer, meditation, virtue and union with God. Therefore I can see only a hindrance and not a help to personal religion in the priesthood and papacy.

Answer: The purpose of all religion is correctly stated in this objection, viz., to bring a soul into personal union with God. However, it must not be forgotten that it is obligatory on all men to observe any rules that have been set down by God Himself as necessary means to the proper union with God. If God has spoken about how men are to attain union with Him, it is folly for a man to say, "I have my own system of attaining to union with God."

Certainly no one who believes in Christ or in the Bible can say that Christ did not lay down a rule that men must be dependent on other men for the means of their union with God. He said to His apostles, "He that heareth you, heareth me." He commanded them "to teach all nations" and "to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." He commanded them, when He first performed the miracle of the Eucharist, to "do this in commemoration of me," and thereby to "show the death of the Lord." None of these means of union with God prescribed by Christ would ever be available to men without human instruments appointed by Christ. The important point is that Christ willed them and commanded them, and against His will and command no one may say, "But I don't need them."

But what about individuals who do reach a state in which they feel themselves to be closely united to God by their direct prayers and communings? And are these not better than men who attend Mass and receive sacraments and use the ministrations of priests, but whose religion is almost pure formalism, without conscious union with God? In answer to the first question, we may say that God does not reject anyone's attempts to pray to Him and to be conscious of Him even though through ignorance they are unaware of the means He wants them to use. If, however, they reject the means God set up for the attainment of real union with Him through their own perversity, then their vaunted feeling of union with God is only a deception. In answer to the second question, it should be quite clear that they who use the forms Christ set up in His Church as forms only and not as means of ever closer union with God, are as perverse and reprehensible as those who reject the necessary forms entirely.

Happenings in Rome

Monthly round-up of significant events in the capital of Christendom.

C. D. McEnniry

Vestments

HOW DID bishops and priests get started wearing the strange clothes they now use at Mass? They got started for a very practical reason—because they had nothing else to wear. Everybody wore those clothes. Naturally the first bishops and priests sent out by Jesus Christ wore them too. In the early days, just as in our own, many great international changes took place. The barbarians came down from the north and overran the decaying Roman Empire. These northerners dressed in short breeches and tight jackets, and everybody else began doing the same. The bishops did not like to say Mass in such attire, so they kept on using the same old-fashioned flowing garments when they went to the altar. They called these “sacred vestments.” They gave to each one a symbolical meaning, and, while donning it, said an appropriate prayer directed toward the divine sacrifice they were about to offer. That custom has endured to the present day. For example, the silk scarf the priest wears on his right arm was originally a large handkerchief to wipe away perspiration. But it suggests the sheaf of wheat the reaper held in his left arm while cutting the grain with his right, and so he prays that, as he weeps while sowing the seed, he may rejoice while bringing in the sheaves (of immortal souls). While putting on the last heavy garment—the chasuble—he recalls that the Master said: “My yoke is sweet, and my burden is light,” and he prays to bear worthily

the yoke of the priesthood.

Why does the bishop wait until he comes out and sits on his throne before changing his shoes? That too stems from a practical reason when he had to wade through the mud to get to church. There he would change to the clean white sandals more befitting the holy place. In the ancient cathedrals there was a large room, called the bishop’s sacristy, where this practical act was performed. Many of our modern cathedrals do not have a bishop’s sacristy, and, in order to carry out the ancient ceremonial rite, the bishop puts on the sandals while vesting on the throne.

Pope Pius XII, who is also a practical man, thinks this not altogether becoming. It might lead the irreverent to say that the bishop had slept late and had not time to complete his toilette. And so he has just issued a decree modifying the ancient ritual: Where the cathedral lacks a bishop’s sacristy, the bishop is to put on the sandals before he leaves the house.

This practical Pope has made another change in ecclesiastical garb. Times are hard, he says, and he himself and the clergy are trying to live parsimoniously, in order to have something left to give to the poor. He has ordered the group of new Cardinals to shorten by half the traditional silk train and thus save expenses, and also to discard some of the other ornaments.

This order was given to the Cardinals. The patriarchs, archbishops,

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bishops, abbots, protonotaries and prelates, got a doubt. They wondered whether this order held also for them. They sent in an official inquiry. The official answer was: "Yes."

Salaries

It will surprise many to know that the salary (if and when) received by bishops and priests is not their own property. It is "church property," to be employed for their moderate support, the remainder to be applied to works of religion and to the needs of the poor. According to the old adage: "Priests and bishops should die without sins, without debts, and without wealth acquired in the ministry." Few of them find difficulty in observing the last prescription!

Asiatic Cardinals

The Pope had waited for years before appointing the new group of cardinals to assist him in the guidance of the Universal Church. But when one of the newly-appointed, the Archbishop of Venice, died, he did not wait forty-eight hours before naming another. This time it was the Archbishop of Bombay, the first cardinal ever appointed for the vast region of India. There are now two Asiatic cardinals. The other is the exiled cardinal who was expelled from China by the Reds. He has sought refuge with his brethren of the Society of the Divine Word at Techny, Illinois, where his humility, his piety and his courtesy and warm

friendliness captivate the hearts of all who meet him.

Family Rosary

Ordinarily the Pope says his rosary at home with the members of his household, like any good father of a family. But on the feast of the Immaculate Conception he allowed an international broadcast, and millions had the privilege of answering "Holy Mary" to the "Hail Marys" of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

Korean Catholics

A list—and only a partial list—records 7,292 conversions of adult Koreans from June 30, 1951, to June 30, 1952. Most of them were in the diocese of the Korean bishop Choel, which is staffed principally by Korean priests. Catholic-born Korean children, and infants and adults baptized in the hour of death bring the figure for baptisms to 15,669. The year before the war there were in the whole of Korea 3,279 adult conversions.

New York

The Vatican newspaper carried a headline: "The Discovery of New York." We wondered who had, at long last, found that interesting town. It proved to be the Catholic navigator from Florence, Italy, who, in 1524, commanded the French ship, "La Dauphine," which was the first European vessel to enter what is now the port of New York. His statue has just been unveiled at Battery Park, on the point of Manhattan.

For the Abandoned

The Brothers of the Christian Schools of LaSalle conduct a unique school in the city of Pompeii, Italy. In it they accept only pupils whose mother, father, or both are serving a prison sentence of at least fifteen years.



Sideglances

By the Bystander

An item in a Milwaukee daily paper recently provided a great deal of food for thought especially for those who are inclined to wince or squirm under urgings to give generously to the support of their church and religion. It points out that of all the church organizations in Wisconsin, the Central Seventh Day Adventists reported the highest per capita contributions of their members to their church and religion. This religious body consists of only 390 members, yet these contributed something over \$78,000 to religion during the year. Broken down, this means that every man, woman and child in the sect gave at least \$200. Of the \$78,000 contributed, only about \$13,000 was used for the needs of the local Adventist Church. The rest went to the medical, missionary, publishing, educational activities of the Adventist Church at large. The Seventh Day Adventists work in 288 countries, support 39,000 missionaries and put out programs on 900 radio stations.

This Protestant sect has long been known as the one whose members lead the field in contributions to religion. They still preach and accept the Old Testament norm that an individual must give a tithe, i.e., one-tenth, of his income to the work of his church. One of the chief tenets of the Seventh Day Adventists may provide the motivation for this unusual generosity. They believe that Christ is about to return to the world, that, indeed, He may suddenly appear any day and gather His elect around Him. If a person is truly convinced of this as a fact, it stands to reason that he would think little of building up or keeping a fortune for the distant and unknown future. He would naturally much prefer to be ready

to be selected by Christ on the occasion of His second coming, than to be found living luxuriously but rejected by Christ.

There is no heresy that does not have its good points and from which possessors of the true religion cannot learn something. Catholic Scripture scholars and all well-instructed Catholics know that the expectation of an imminent second coming of Christ into the world is a misinterpretation of certain Scripture texts dealing with the end of the world. Yet there is plenty of motivation provided by the Bible for as great a generosity to the cause of religion on the part of Catholics as is actually practiced by the Seventh Day Adventists. Christ taught all His followers that "death will come to them as a thief in the night;" that it is foolish to build up storage barns and to put away treasures of money and material goods because without warning a man's soul may be called to an accounting; that it will profit a man nothing to gain the whole world if he loses his soul. Moreover, He commanded that His Gospel be made known throughout the whole world and made the fulfillment of that command dependent on the sacrifices of those to whom the Gospel had already been preached. So every true Christian can expect that Christ will come suddenly, at least to him, and demand an accounting of what he did with his material goods. So every Catholic can be convinced that it is a part of his task to extend the preaching of the Gospel all around the world, and can feel a sense of shame that after so many centuries it still has so far to go. Certainly there is just as much motivation available for Catholics to give generously to the cause of religion as for the Seventh Day Adventists who are

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looking for the visible reappearance of Christ. Yet the total contributions of all Catholics in America to missionary causes in 1952 breaks down to a figure of a few cents per person.

Somehow it seems that many Catholics have fallen heir to a strange concept of what church support is all about. Some of these have been victims of a special brand of calumny, that is as naive as it is vicious. An example of this recently came to our hand. Someone sent in copies of a noisome little publication called "Voice of Freedom," which is the organ of a German-American society called the *Freie Gemeinde* in Milwaukee. In one issue an author explains to his readers how priests become fabulously wealthy. This is his explanation: "Suppose that five Masses are said on Sunday in a large city parish and that, on the average, 1500 worshippers attend each Mass; and that ten cents, on the average, is paid at the door by each worshipper; this would equal \$150 for each Mass or \$750 for the five Masses. Suppose that ten cents, on the average, is received from each worshipper, either as a contribution to the offertory collection, or for a share in a Mass which is to be said during the week; this would equal \$150 at each Mass, or \$750 for the five Masses. Add together the \$750 received at the door and the \$750 received for shares in the prospective Mass, and the result will be \$1500, which is the income on one Sunday. Multiply this \$1500 by 52 and the product will be \$78,000, which is the amount that the pastor receives for one year from his Sunday services alone. In addition to this amount, he, too, receives offerings on the six holy days, and proceeds from various form of graft. His total annual income is at least \$100,000. You see, it's a very prosperous business, this priest industry!" . . . Any intelligent Catholic will recognize the puerility of this analysis, and any business man will laugh over its implications. First of all, every priest in the

Catholic Church is limited to a certain salary to be taken from the regular income of his church; it is usually much less than \$2,000 a year, and he may not touch a penny more than that under pain of sin. Secondly, if a priest is in charge of a church that can seat 1500 people, the overhead of lighting, maintaining, heating and repairing the building alone, (to say nothing of a school and other buildings) will in itself amount to a fabulous sum. This is elementary, to anyone who knows anything about Catholic matters, yet there are those who still think of every penny contributed to a parish as going into the pocket of the priest attached to it.

Perhaps the most common cause of lack of generosity toward the church and the spread of religion is attachment to material things combined with the lack of any realistic notion of how effectively these things can serve the essential task of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ. The stewardship concept of wealth and possessions is largely disappearing, especially in America. In its place is the idea that "what I earn is mine, not God's, not my neighbor's, not subject to anyone else's disposal or use." It is strange again that while the Catholic Church has been the great defender through all the ages of the right to private property as against socialism, communism and statism, she has not succeeded too well in inculcating the principle of stewardship in those who have done well in amassing private property. The notion of stewardship is a combination of many things. It starts with the realization that nobody ever takes any money into the other world — he leaves it all behind him. Having only a temporary hold on his material possessions, a man realizes that they are more a loan from God than an absolute gift, even though he has worked hard to earn them. Since the lender is God, God has a right to suggest and even dictate the ways in which they should be used. He says that they

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should be used for maintenance of self and family, and that what is over and above be used for charity, religion, relief of misery, the honor of God. He also provides innumerable opportunities for carrying out His wishes, in the needs of the poor, of missionaries, of those who are working without recompense to spread the Gospel and to save souls.

It is obvious that the stewardship concept of material things has taken full possession of the minds and hearts of the Sev-

enth Day Adventists. With a small membership, and an erroneous interpretation of Scripture, they accomplish tremendous things. If only a proportion of the huge body of American Catholics were to become imbued with the same spirit, and to look on Christ's coming to them in death as an event to be expected at almost any time, it is certain that the full truth of the revelations of Christ would rapidly reach millions who are waiting for it, and that Christ would reign over a far larger part of the world than He now does.

Patter

The following paragraph may only serve to discourage the Older Generation in its eternal and seemingly fruitless effort to understand the Younger Generation, but we print it anyway, as a sample of the obstacles to be overcome. Dug up somewhere by Delos Avery in the *Chicago Tribune*, it is a slice of current teen-ager talk:

"Pal, you're in on the down beat. Slug it slay. Your Bill certainly puts boogie in the old New England corn. Those kids really send me. Roger! I gander your slick chicks and snazzy squabs, they crack ankles all round here, I could throw a wingding myself. Lush! Zingo! Strictly from top-drawer. . . Whatever it is, you cut the rug. You're in the groove, you ride the jam, solid Jackson, terrific! Let's go down to the jukery, the jive hive, the teen canteen, and do some barrelhouse jump . . . So help me, pal, you're stuff in quiver-giver. It's on the beam, it takes me apart. Let the old fuddyyuddies take a powder. Razmataz for the droops. Let's us and the whistlebait beat feet for the burglary. Hubba, hubba! Tonight's a swingeroo. Good luck, pal. Ride on down. You're cooking. Plant you now, dig you later."

Prayer For The Aging

"My God, Redeemer of our great family, do not suffer that any ridiculous melancholy should come to hinder me from rejoicing as I see the oil in my lamp grow lower, as I watch, each day, my reserves of life so steadily desert me.

"Teach me to grow old aright, without murmuring and without laziness, not that I may isolate myself, but that I may augment myself, refusing ever to appeal to work already done as an excuse for not putting my whole effort forth each day."

Milwaukee *Herald-Citizen* quoting Pierre Charles, S.J.

The greatest undeveloped territory in the world lies under your hat.

—Voice of St. Jude



Three Minute Instruction

Purposes of Our Lord's Passion

It is often said that Our Lord's capacity for meriting in behalf of men was so infinite that He could have redeemed the whole human race by some action far less taxing than the bitter passion and death He did endure. At the same time it must be remembered that God cannot do anything unnecessary or useless or not perfectly conformed to the end to be attained. Thus we know that Our Lord had many purposes in accepting His long and bitter passion, and we can reflect on them for the benefit of our souls.

1. The first purpose of Our Lord's passion and death was the redemption of all mankind from original sin and the meriting of sanctifying grace for all who would accept it. This might indeed have been effected by less than the bitter passion and death He endured, were it not closely related to the other purposes He had to fulfill.

2. The second purpose of Our Lord's passion and death was to show beyond all possibility of doubt the infinite love of God for men. For this He had to use means that would appeal to and convince the minds of men. The only perfectly convincing means to this end is suffering. Christ suffered and died to show that His love for men is greater than any other.

3. The third purpose of the passion and death of Our Lord was to make eternally manifest the nature of the injury man attempts to do to God by every actual sin. No description of sin in mere words would have had the force of Our Lord's consent to let sin do what it would to His human nature. It scourged Him and crowned Him with thorns and crucified Him, and the picture of these effects of actual sin would powerfully motivate people to avoid actual sin to the end of time.

4. The fourth purpose of Our Lord's passion was to lead the way in accepting suffering, as all men would have to suffer in some degree in order to earn heaven. Had He merely said: "Take up your cross," few would have heeded Him. Since He took the cross first Himself, many are willing to follow Him, even though there are still those who refuse.

Each of these purposes of Our Lord's Passion and death should be the object of meditation during Lent and especially Holy Week. Each one of them will make the one who ponders it a better Christian.



Pointed Paragraphs

Hard Penances

The penances that Catholics voluntarily adopt during Lent should measure the degree of their love for God, desire for heaven, and realization of the actual meaning of sin.

The more a person loves God, the more good things he should want to give up for Him, for the simple reason that He gave up so much to prove His love for human beings when He became man.

The more a person desires heaven, the more he will be conscious of the danger of clinging too fondly to the good things of this world, even to the possible extent of sacrificing heaven for them, and the more he will want to prove to himself and to God that the world's pleasures have no binding hold on his heart.

The more a person realizes the meaning of sin, as manifested principally in what it did to the innocent person of Christ, the more he will want to make atonement for the sins he has committed. He will want to do so in the same manner in which Christ made atonement, by suffering for them.

Some penances reveal a great love of God and a strong desire for heaven and a deep conviction of the debts incurred by sin. Such are the following, none of them commanded, but all having a direct relation to the chief goals in anyone's life.

1. Reading no daily newspapers during Lent. This is a sure way of cultivating detachment from the world's affairs.

2. Making a half-hour meditation

every day. This is a sure way to learn to live with Christ and in Christ and for Christ. A half-hour's meditation each day spreads its thoughts over all the rest of the day.

3. Taking no liquids except water during Lent. The thought of the thirst of Christ makes this easy, and the fact that hundreds of healthy saints have done it for years answers the objection that it is bad for the health.

4. Making the way of the cross each day. This is the perfect meditation for Lent, combined with action, and rewarded by the richest indulgences placed within the reach of Catholics.

5. Reading spiritual books for an hour each day. Reading will always be the essential and most effective means of learning and thinking about God, and being inspired to love Him.

Adopt any of these hard penances and you grow tremendously in spiritual stature during Lent. But in doing so, be sure to clear away every motive except those of loving God, desire for heaven, and willing to make atonement for your own sins and the sins of the world.

Penance for the Rich

If you are rich, Lent should inspire you to one special form of penance more important for you than any other. It should inspire you to give away to some religious or religiously charitable cause a fairly large part of your wealth.

The reason for this is that your greatest spiritual danger lies in your natural attachment to the large amount of material wealth that is yours, and

in the danger of your desiring to increase it rather than diminish it in any way. A proof of this is the fact that nothing will hurt you more than merely the suggestion that you part with a considerable amount of your hoarded wealth. The more the suggestion hurts, the more you are attached and in danger. The more it hurts, too, the greater will be the value for your soul of the penance of doing the thing that hurts.

You are rich, let us say, if you can count up tangible assets of more than \$200,000, not counting your home and the things you actually use, and over and above which you have a well-paying job. These assets may be soundly invested in bonds, lucrative real estate, stocks, etc. Don't use the argument that you dare not touch these sound, interest-paying investments. That's the devil's way of making you want to stay very rich and get richer.

What would be a good sum for you to get rid of during Lent, in a spirit of really hurting penance, for the love of the poor, suffering Christ and for the sake of your immortal soul? Let's put that figure at two per cent, the amount that theologians say that rich people should use for religion and charity. So, you count up your wealth and find that you are good for about \$200,000. Give away \$4,000 this Lent. Sell some securities to do so if you have to. If your assets amount to a million dollars, get rid of \$20,000, which is two per cent of a million. Or, if you prefer give away every penny of the interest you would receive on your invested capital during a year. It will hurt your feelings, but it won't hurt your manner of living at all.

Do this particular penance without

figuring out carefully how much it will save you on your income taxes. You will have plenty of opportunity and incentive for giving to good causes during the rest of the year with an eye to income tax deductions. But do this one for the love of Christ. Do it to atone for sins you have committed, perhaps sins made possible by your wealth. Do it to prove to Christ that you are one rich person who remembers that Christ said it is very difficult for rich people to get to heaven. You can get to heaven if you just make it clear that you can put a good chunk of money in God's hands once in a while, without feeling that it is folly to diminish the amount of material things you possess.

The Way of the Cross

You cannot know God's love for you fully, and cannot love Him wholeheartedly in return, unless you know and think about the suffering that His Son endured for you. And the easiest way to keep yourself mindful of God's love is by often making the imaginative journey with Christ to His death on Calvary. That is done by making the way of the cross.

Medieval Christians dreamed of bringing their love of God to a final supreme degree by journeying to the Holy Land and walking the way of the cross in person. Thousands made the difficult journey, and were rewarded with a love of Christ that never dimmed thereafter.

You can make the journey in spirit in your own parish church. You can make it every day. Those fourteen beautiful paintings or statues on the walls of your church are not mere decorations. They are invitations to you to journey often to Calvary. During Lent especially, you should make use of the opportunity, both by par-

ticipating in the congregational way of the cross and by making it by yourself on days when it is not publicly made.

There is only one requirement for the gaining of the immense indulgences attached to the way of the cross when you make it privately. You need only pass from station to station, pausing at each one to meditate for a little while on the sufferings of Christ. No vocal prayer, before, during or after, no genuflections, no specified amount of time, are required. The way of the cross is simply a journey with meditation. Making it wins you a plenary indulgence each time, and two plenary indulgences on days on which you receive Holy Communion, besides countless other partial indulgences.

Reading

A committee of the government in Washington is endeavoring to clean up the mess of obscene magazines and booklets that is currently cluttering up the country. We wish this committee every success.

But we take the stand, excessively rigorous and narrow-minded though it may seem to some, that the protracted reading of most of our secular magazines, obscene or not, is destructive of the way of life preached by Christ.

The whole tone of the nationally popular magazines is one that harmonizes chiefly with the melody of the world. The world is the thing that counts. If religious topics are included in an issue, they are included only as items of interest or the peculiar ways of a particular individual or group of individuals, and not as realities that constitute a necessary philosophy of life. The acceptance of the supernatural is purely optional.

The impression given is that practices concerning the spirit are pious luxuries that a man can indulge in during his leisure hours, much as he might indulge in a cultivation of the arts or an interest in the Indians of New Mexico. Religion is not shown as an unyielding command of God, as a vitally essential road map to heaven, as food for starving souls in any of the well known profane magazines of the day, from the *Saturday Evening Post* down through *Life*, *Look* and the *Readers Digest*. Religion is given considerably less space than romance, adventure, success and science, and when finally touched on is mixed up with ads for stockings and girdles as though it rated just about as much consideration. On one page there may be a picture of the Pope, and on the next page, a story of the latest method of birth control.

Whether or not the editors have to follow this program because of the variety of beliefs and unbeliefs amongst their subscribers is beside the point. The point is that such magazines sap the faith of the faithful and gradually build up a conviction in the most Catholic of minds that what the world has to offer is of far more moment than what God has to offer through religion and virtue.

Poisoned in this manner, the Catholic begins to think that it is more important to marry for "love" than to marry in accord with the law of God and the Church; that it is better to be rich than to be poor; that it is better to be married than to be a nun or a priest; that it is better to spend one's high school days in dating, in love-making and romancing than in studying books and in following a code of high morality; that it is better to get up in the morning, take breakfast and leave immediately for school or work

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than it is to get up in the morning and start off the day with Mass and Holy Communion.

The disease incubated by these magazines is not one that rips the faith out of the soul as a virulent cancer rips the stomach out of the body. It is a slow, gradually consuming disease like tuberculosis.

We warn *reading* parents to watch themselves and their *reading* children. It is just as fatal to die gradually through protracted secularistic reading as it is to die immediately through obscene reading. An occasional tasting of these periodicals will not do a great deal of harm. It is the steady diet that kills.

Family Communion

The movement, growing so rapidly, of all the members of a family receiving Holy Communion together is a good movement.

We are told so often by the Church that no family can succeed in finding happiness in the midst of poverty, sickness and the other difficulties that beset the raising of children and the maintaining of love unless it is a Christian family. A Christian family is one that is guided by the principles of Christ and strengthened with the grace of Christ.

The grace is obtained for both parents and children through the frequent reception of the Eucharist.

The principles are inculcated in the children through the example of the parents rather than merely through

the commands of the parents. The parents lead the way; the children follow without having to be told they must. Children are imitative, and this holds for practices of religion as well as everything else.

Sunday morning is the time for the giving of this example. Mother and father lead the way up to the Communion railing. The children have been asked whether or not they want to receive Our Lord at the same time. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the children do what their parents do.

But it is difficult for the children to see the necessity of Holy Communion if mother and father are having breakfast when it is time for them, the children, to set out for Mass (even though the parents received at an earlier Mass), and the aroma of bacon and eggs is pervading the house; or if mother and father are still in bed because they intended to go to the eleven o'clock Mass.

The family thrives insofar as it is a unit, or better still, a union of many in one. The important functions of the family should be done together. Holy Communion is by far the most important thing of all that a family can do. Therefore it is only right that all the members should approach the holy table together. A greater "oneness" will result than if each member went his or her separate way and talked to Christ in a corner, as it were, without allowing mother, father, brothers and sisters to be in on the visit.

Idea

A writer for the *Chicago Daily News* tells us that some genius can make a fortune if he will invent a woman's purse with a zipper at the bottom.

"That's where they always find what they want."

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

Selected and Edited by J. Schaefer

VICTORIES OF THE MARTYRS

THE MARTYRS OF JAPAN

Editor's Note: The first mission to Japan was opened in the year 1549 by St. Francis Xavier. It lasted until about the year 1633, when the missionaries were forced to leave the islands. During 47 of these 84 years the Christians of the empire were subjected to fierce and intermittent persecutions by the emperors. Despite these persecutions, however, perhaps even because of them, the Church flourished in the islands, and thousands were converted from paganism to the true faith. St. Alphonsus has written a rather lengthy, but eloquent description of these persecutions, which we shall include in these pages of THE LIGUORIAN during this and succeeding issues.

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Our European priests who undertook to evangelize Japan were at first very successful. But in the year 1586 God made known by various signs of the approach of a long and bloody persecution that menaced the rising church. The persecution was begun by the emperor in 1587. One year later it became a very bloody one in the Christian kingdom of Bungo.

The first victory which I shall describe is that of a good man of Funai, named Joram Macama. He was a soldier when he embraced Christianity, and later converted his whole family. Thereafter he spent his time in instructing the faithful and aiding the faithful. When the king of Bungo apostatized from the faith, he commanded three of his officers to put

Joram to death. They went in search of him, but fearing the bravery which the former soldier had evidenced in war, they took with them an escort of one hundred men. Anticipating their arrival, Joram sent his wife and children to another place and remained alone in his house preparing himself for death.

Toward midnight the soldiers approached to see whether he was armed. The saintly old man assured them that they had nothing to fear, that far from fleeing from them, he was anxiously awaiting their coming. He then took a cross in his hand, placed a rosary about his neck, and knelt down to give thanks to God for allowing him to die for His name. After being stabbed three times in the breast, he presented his neck for the death-blow. While he pronounced the names of Jesus and Mary, three blows of the scimitar deprived him of life. The faithful hastened to take away his body and bury it. This so enraged the king that he put the valiant martyr's wife and children to death, as well as many other Christians.

These first acts of tyranny inspired the Christians with great fear. But when they learned of the courageous deeds of other martyrs, far from being intimidated, they publicly demonstrated their faith by openly wearing the rosary about their necks. Seeing that the Christians were so resolute and fearing that a riot might occur, the tyrant was content for the present to conceal his hatred in order to re-

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venge himself at a more favorable time.

In the year 1582, Taicosama had ascended the imperial throne. At first he was favorable to the missionaries. But four or five years later his favor turned into distrust and hatred. For several years, however, he contented himself with forbidding the open practice of the Christian religion.

On Dec. 9, 1596, the emperor ordered the governor of Meaco, as well as the governor of Ozaca, where the religious of St. Francis were established, to arrest these fathers and to draw up a list of the Christians who frequented their churches. At this time, Father Peter Baptist, the superior of the Franciscans, wrote the following to a religious of his order:

"The first day on which guards were placed before our door the Christians confessed and passed the whole night in prayer. For we had been informed that we were to be put to death on the following day. I gave Holy Communion to all our brethren, as if for the last time. Then each one provided himself with a cross to carry in his hand while going to the place of execution. Our Christians filled me with consolation by the ardent desire which they displayed to die for Jesus Christ. When the news spread that these had been condemned to death, many others came from different places to join them. 'We must once die,' they exclaimed. 'We all desire that this may be for the glory of God, and we pray Him to give us the grace to do so; help us to obtain this from the divine Goodness.'"

During this time a large number of wonderful examples were witnessed, some of which we will include here. Prince Ucondono, a distinguished general, to whom Taicosama was indebted for his empire, had already

lived six years in exile, because he refused to abjure his faith. Stripped of his dignities, deprived of his estates, he lived under the supervision of the king of Canga along with his old father, his wife and his large family. When he heard of the persecution, he took leave of the king and set out immediately for Meaco, exclaiming:

"My dear prince, the greatest happiness in which I can delight in this world is to die for the faith that I profess. Whatever may be the assurance that you give me, I am going to prepare myself for death."

The fervor of the two sons of Genifonio, who was a pagan and prime-minister of the emperor, and who was ignorant of the fact that his sons had received baptism, was not less great than that of Prince Ucondono. The elder son, but twenty years of age, was named Paul Sacondono. He enjoyed the favor of the emperor and commanded a fortress a great distance from the capital. When he heard that all the fathers, as well as the bishops, had been arrested, and that all the Christians were to be put to death, he at once dispatched couriers to Meaco and Ozaca to learn the truth.

While awaiting their return, he began to plan for the best means to attain martyrdom. He at first thought of showing himself publicly at the capital, so as to be arrested. But, fearing that no one would dare to lay hands on him if he were seen clad in his ordinary costume, he had his hair cut off and disguised himself as an ecclesiastic, resolving to appear there with eight of his faithful Christian servants. Only one among the servants showed any signs of inconstancy, and this one because he had been recently baptized. Sacondono advised him not to expose himself along with the others. But the servant generous-

ly responded:

"My Lord, I well know what the eternal salvation of my soul is worth. Since martyrdom is the shortest road to gain it, I prefer it, and I make no more account of my life than I do of the dust under my feet."

Satisfied with this answer, the young lord went to his room. Here he prayed fervently to God to make him worthy to die for His love. Then he wrote to his parents to inform them that he was a Christian, and that he had formed the resolution to die for his faith. In this disposition he made a general confession, and prepared himself for death.

His brother's name was Constantine. He arrived at Meaco with a cousin, named Michael, where he received the fatal news. He cried out:

"Oh, we have arrived just in time to be martyrs."

He immediately went to Fucino, where his father dwelt, and declared that he was a Christian. The minister, who tenderly loved his son, was astonished. He took him aside and said to him:

"But, my son, if the emperor commands me to put to death all Christians, it will be necessary for me to make you die with them."

Constantine answered: "My father, I have declared to you that I am a Christian, not that I may avoid death, but that you may regulate your affairs. As for me, I am ready to die at the hand of the executioner, and even by your own hand, rather than disobey God. You certainly do not wish that I should cast myself into hell merely to please a prince!"

Despite his father's and mother's entreaties, the youth returned to Meaco with his cousin, seeking to find an opportunity to be inscribed on the list of martyrs.

We may also see at this time the generosity of several Christian women of Meaco. Having learned that the persecution had been proclaimed, they assembled at the house of one of them, named Mary, that they might constantly be prepared for martyrdom. Each took care to take with her, her nuptial garment, that is, the garment in which she wished to die. A person of very high rank, fearing that she would on this account escape being prosecuted by the law, went secretly to Mary's house in order to die with the rest. Mary had living with her an adopted child, named Gratia, ten years of age. She endeavored to persuade the girl to return to her father's house in order to avert the danger of being crucified. But the child answered with firmness:

"No; I wish to die with you, because I, too, am a Christian. Have no fear for me. As long as I shall be with you I shall not fear death."

Another of the women said to her companions: "I am resolved to die for the faith. But if you should ever see me tremble at the sight of death, I beg you to drag me forcibly before the executioners, in order that I may not fail to have a share in your crown."

Such were the dispositions of these fervent converts at the moment when it was believed that all the faithful were going to be nailed to the cross. But for the majority of them, heaven was satisfied with their good-will. The governor of Meaco, though a pagan himself, tried his utmost to persuade the emperor to soften his harsh decree, and finally succeeded in having the number reduced to twenty-four. The emperor had commanded that their noses and ears be cut off, but the governor had only the tip of the left ear cut off.

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This was done on January 3, 1597, in the grand square of Meaco. The twenty-four condemned persons were then placed on eight carts and were ignominiously conducted through the streets, preceded by an officer who carried a sign upon the end of a pike, whereon could be read the sentences pronounced against them. The intended ignominious procession, however, was turned into a triumph, for the entire population was moved to tears, and many Christians went so far as to beg the soldiers to put them among the number of the condemned, that they might die with them. But the favor was refused. When the prisoners were returned to their cells, they embraced one another, rejoicing at the happy death that awaited them. They filled the guards with astonishment and made them exclaim:

"What kind of men are these who rejoice amidst torments and every sort of insult?"

On the following day, January 4th, they were placed on beasts of burden, to be transported to Nagasaki, the place of execution. After a month's journey they arrived at their destination. During the journey they were exposed, as they had been at Meaco, in different cities to the gaze of the people. But in each place the effect, again, was the opposite of that intended. Two fervent Christians, Peter Sukegiro and Francis Facheiente, insisted on following them during the whole journey and ministered to their needs. Finally the guards, unable to repel them, added their names to the list of the condemned. Thus the number of martyrs was increased to twenty-six.

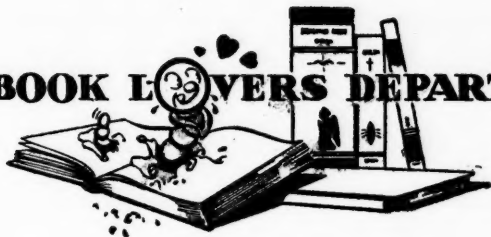
On the day after their arrival at

Nagasaki, they were conducted to a hill situated near the city, where the instruments of death had been prepared. When they saw the crosses that were destined to be their Calvary, they gave themselves up to transports of joy and each hastened to place himself at his post. Their limbs and the midsection of their bodies were tied to the crosses with cords according to the custom of the country. A collar of iron was put around their necks. Then the crosses were raised simultaneously and fixed in the ground, all in a row, with their faces turned toward the city.

Father Peter Baptist intoned the *Benedictus*, and his companions joined their voices to his. Soon after each one was pierced with two lances, which, when thrust into their sides crossed each other in the breast and came out at the shoulders. At this moment a large number of the faithful who had come to the hill made their way through the line of soldiers and entered the enclosure to gather up the blood of the martyrs with cloths and to procure for themselves a part of their garments. We are told that a heavenly light was shining above their bodies and that for a long time many stars appeared over the hill.

Editor's Note: These twenty-six martyrs, beatified by Pope Urban VIII in 1627, were canonized by Pope Pius IX on June 8, 1862. Their feast was fixed for the 5th of February, the day on which they consummated their sacrifice. Among these Japanese martyrs were six Franciscan religious, seventeen Japanese and three Japanese Jesuits.

BOOK LOVERS DEPARTMENT



CATHOLIC AUTHOR OF THE MONTH

Reverend Thomas Verner Moore, O. Cart., 1877

Psychologist

I. Life: Thomas Verner Moore was born in Louisville, Kentucky, on October 22, 1877, the son of John and Charlotte McIlvain Moore. His primary education was received at a public school in Louisville. The family moved to New York so that he could continue his education at Fordham. In 1896 Thomas Moore joined the Paulists and was ordained to the priesthood in 1901. He received his Ph.D. from the Catholic University in 1903 and he began his long association with the Catholic University as instructor, professor and finally head of the department of psychology and psychiatry. The years, 1906-1908, were spent as chaplain of the Newman Club at the University of California.

He studied medicine at Georgetown University, Munich and John Hopkins University and the last named University awarded him the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1915. Father Moore served as a Major in the Medical Corps during World War I. After the War he entered the Benedictine novitiate in Scotland and returned to the United States as one of the co-founders of the Benedictine Priory of St. Anselm in Washington, D.C.

Doctor Moore was associated with the child center in Washington since 1916. He also helped to establish St. Gertrude's School, a pioneer school for the education of retarded girls, and the Priory School, a preparatory school for boys. He lectured

in psychiatry at the University of Madrid in 1947. In June of that year Father Moore entered the Carthusian Order at Burgos, Spain. This order of hermits was brought to this country a few years ago and now has a foundation in Whitingham, Vermont, where Father Thomas Verner Moore lives as Father Pablo Maria.

II. Books: Thomas Verner Moore has been one of the great pioneer Catholics in the field of modern psychology and psychiatry. Much of his work is found in scientific lectures and papers, but there are a number of books within the reach of the non-professional reader. In the field of ethics, Dr. Moore wrote *An Historical Introduction to Ethics and Principles of Ethics*, a textbook for nurses. *Prayer* is a popular explanation of the technique of prayer. *Dynamic Psychology* is a study of the driving forces behind human conduct; *Cognitive Psychology* is an analysis of the process of knowledge.

III. The Book: In these days of popular interest in personal analysis and improvement Catholic readers will profit very much by the last book of Father Moore, *Personal Mental Hygiene*. The learned and deeply spiritual author traces the way in which the entire personality, body and soul, can be kept in harmony and hence in health. Unlike so much of modern psychology and psychiatry, *Personal Mental Hygiene* furnishes spiritual goals and spiritual means.

CHRISTOPHERS AND GOVERNMENT

Government is Your Business. By James Keller. 383pp. Garden City, N. Y.: Perma-books. \$0.35.

The Christophers, under the dynamic leadership of Father James Keller, have been waging an active campaign to awaken individuals to a realization of their moral obligation and personal ability to better conditions in the world. In his latest book Father Keller has turned our attention to our responsibility to improve the government. As the caption on the cover states: "Either you run your government, or government runs you." The whole purpose of the book is to arouse people from their lethargic "let George do it" attitude. In simple and forceful language it is pointed out just what can be accomplished on a city, state and national level. The possibilities for good that a sincere public servant in civil office is given are also detailed. The appendix contains those too infrequently read documents, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. There is certainly a great need for this book to awaken the public conscience that has begun to stir as a result of the Kefauver Commission and the wave of scandals in high government circles.

Short Stories

The Great Disciple and Other Stories. By W. B. Ready. 158pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$2.50.

W. B. Ready, an Irishman born in Wales, began his writing after coming to America. He desired his children to know the Irish way of life and has recorded the humor and the sorrow of Ireland in this collection of short stories. Many of these stories have appeared in national magazines and one of them won a prize award. In these delightful pages we meet the leprechauns, the giant Finn MacCool, and we attend the meeting of the mothers' society. The flavor of Ireland is in these entertaining stories.

Two Religious Founders

The Table of the King. The story of Mother Gamelin. By Katherine Burton. 244pp. New York, N.Y.: McMullen Books, Inc. \$3.00.

Whom Love Impels. The life of Mother Pauline. By Katherine Burton. 234pp. New York, N.Y.: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. \$3.00.

The last two books of Katherine Burton contain the biographies of two founders of religious congregations of women. By coincidence both congregations are Sisters of Charity. Mother Gamelin established the Sisters of Charity of Providence and Mother Pauline Von Malinckrodt founded the Sisters of Christian Charity.

The Table of the King, the biography of Mother Gamelin, is the story of the young French Canadian widow who devoted her life to the care of the poor. The generous women whom she gathered around her later joined her in the formation of a new religious congregation. This American congregation now numbers more than 3,500 souls who are laboring for souls in Canada, the United States and Chile.

Whom Love Impels retells the life of Mother Pauline who founded the Sisters of Christian Charity in Germany in 1849. The daughter of a Catholic mother and a Lutheran father, Pauline, while still in the world, spent much time in caring for the sick and old, and in instructing the young. This work later developed into the formation of the Congregation of Sisters of Christian Charity. The persecution of religious took Mother Pauline and her religious to the United States. Now 1100 of her daughters are working for souls in the United States.

These two biographies present the portraits of two spiritual women who were the human instruments of much good wrought by God. Katherine Burton has written very readable biographies of the two religious founders.

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For Children

Pennies for Pauline. By Mary Fabyann Windeatt. 244pp. St. Meinrad, Indiana: The Grail. \$3.00.

Good Morning, Boys and Girls. By Rev. Thomas J. Hosty. 146pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$2.75.

The Rosary for Little Catholics. By Francis McGrade. Illustrated by Bruno Frost. St. Paul, Minn.: The Catechetical Guild. \$25.

Pennies for Pauline is the story of Marie Pauline Jaricot, the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. As a young girl living in the world, Pauline conceived the idea of forming groups of poor people who would give pennies for the foreign missions. Her hope was that this act of charity for strangers would merit the restoration of faith and religious fervor to Europe and especially her own France. The story of her trials and sorrows in the establishment of this great work makes interesting reading. As always, we welcome this latest biography from the talented pen of Miss Windeatt. Children and adults will be fascinated by the personality of Marie Pauline Jaricot.

Most priests will agree that it is very difficult to preach a good sermon to children. Hence they welcome any book that will help them in this great apostolate. *Good Morning, Boys and Girls* is a series of Sunday sermons for the school year. The author, Father Thomas J. Hosty, a former member of the Chicago archdiocesan mission band and author of two previous books of sermons for children, has the knack of using commonplace things and events to point a doctrinal or moral lesson. The busy priest will be stimulated by reading the chapters of this book.

It is amazing to one who knows anything of printing costs how the Catechetical Guild can issue such beautifully illustrated children's books for only twenty-five cents. *The Rosary for Little Catholics* contains beautiful colored pictures that portray the mys-

teries of the rosary. This and its companion books will help parents in the religious instruction of the pre-school child.

Convert Stories

They Heard His Voice. Compiled by Bruno Shafer, O.F.M. Cap. Translated by Berchmans Bittle, O.F.M. Cap. 255pp. New York, N. Y.: McMullen Books, Inc. \$3.00.

This latest collection of convert stories is a little unusual in the fact that all the converts are European or Asian with two exceptions. Henry S. Lucas and Paul Van K. Thomson are the only Americans who tell the story of their journey to the Church. Readers will be particularly interested in Douglas A. Hyde, the English counterpart of Louis Budenz, who resigned from the *English Daily Worker* to enter the Church; Adolph Martin Borman, named after his god-father, Adolph Hitler and his father, Martin Borman, who now is in the seminary preparing for the priesthood; Bishop Paul Melitjew, the Russian Orthodox Bishop, who knew the meaning of life behind the iron curtain. The selection of stories is well made and cradle Catholics will be instructed and inspired by the personal narratives of these sheep who responded to the call of the One True Shepherd.

For The Altar Boy

Letters to an Altar Boy. By Rev. David E. Rosage. 93pp. Milwaukee, Wis.: Bruce Publishing Co. \$1.50.

Father David Rosage, the editor of *The Candlebeam*, a newsletter for altar boys, is the author of *Letters to an Altar Boy*. These letters emphasize the dignity of the altar boy and the qualities he must possess. In down-to-earth language the author reaches the boys' minds to inspire and instruct, and cartoons add to the value of the book. This would be an ideal present to give to altar boys. Those in charge of the Mass-servers will find useful ideas and will be able to read the chapters at the servers' meetings.



Lucid Intervals

The news that Joe had lost his job got around fast and a curious friend asked:

"Why did the foreman fire you?"

"You know what a foreman is," Joe shrugged, "the one who stands around and watches the other men work."

"What's that got to do with it?" his friend wanted to know.

"Well, he just got jealous of me," Joe explained. "People thought that I was the foreman."

A hillbilly, injured during an automobile accident, was in the hospital. His worried wife watched the doctor prepare to operate.

"What's that stuff you're getting ready?" the wife asked.

"An anesthetic," explained the doctor. "Once he sniffs this he won't know a thing."

"Save your time," exclaimed the wife. "He don't know nothing no-how."

The captain said to a newly appointed sergeant:

"Look here, there are men coming into camp night after night after Lights Out has been sounded. It's got to stop."

A few days later he asked the sergeant whether things had improved.

"Oh yes, sir. The last man in blows the bugle now."

Billy, aged six, was getting ready for the first day of school. He wasn't anxious to start, and his mother's tear-filled eyes added to his reluctance. As they drove toward the school his mother's tears continued to flow. Finally he said consolingly:

"Aw, Mom, don't take it so hard. Just as soon as I learn to read comics, I'll quit."

Olga, the Blake's new Swedish maid, asked her mistress:

"Where bane your son? I not seeing him around no more?"

"My son?" asked Mrs. Blake proudly. "Oh, he went back to Yale. I miss him dreadfully, too."

"Yah," answered Olga, "I know how you feel. My brother bane away to yail six times already."

Angus had lived two months in America when he went to see a movie taken in the Canadian wilds. Presently he saw a close-up of a moose.

"I dinna ken what yon beastie is," he remarked to his companion.

His friend explained that it was a moose.

"A moose!" Angus cried. "Well if that is a moose, I dinna want to meet an American rat."

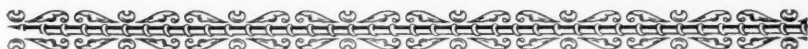
Dazed motorist (regaining consciousness):

"I had the right of way, didn't I?"

Bystander: "Yeah, but the other fellow had the truck."

The applicant for a job as housemaid was being interviewed by the employment agency and was asked if she had any preference as to the kind of family she would like to work for.

"Any kind," she said, "except highbrows. I worked for a pair of them once, and never again. Him and her was arguing all the time, and it kept me running back and forth from the keyhole to the dictionary till I was worn to a frazzle."



FOUR THINGS TO REMEMBER

The biggest things in your life are the things that will happen at its end. They are sometimes called the four last things. They may also be called the four biggest things. They are bigger than anything you ever had, have now, or ever hope to have in this world.

These four biggest things are death, judgment, heaven and hell. You are going to die; you wouldn't be mad enough to doubt that. At death you are going to be judged, as Christ said, according to your deeds. Then you are going to be assigned forever to the place designated by your deeds—heaven or hell. Forever! That's the word to remember. You have 30, 40, 60, 80 years on earth in which to decide where you are going to be *forever*.

The Liguorian is designed to help you make the right decision. It is concerned about your "forever." Read it faithfully and it will teach you how to be safe and happy forever.



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PAMPHLETS FOR STUDY CLUBS

A group of seven new 10 cent pamphlets has just been published by The Liguorian Pamphlet Office. Like many other Liguorian pamphlets, these are ideal for use in study club meetings. Each member of such a club can be asked to read the pamphlet before a meeting, and then full and intelligent discussion on its material can be held at the meeting. The new pamphlets are:

How the World Will End

How to Get Acquainted with God

Don't Be Afraid of the Catholic Church

What Will Hell Be Like?

What Will Happen at the Last Judgment?

When Is Company-Keeping Lawful and Prudent?

Why Catholics Can Not Be Freemasons

Study club groups that are interested in any particular topic that they would like to discuss in successive meetings, are invited to write The Liguorian Pamphlet Office for sample pamphlets on that topic. Or they may write for the entire list of Liguorian pamphlets and make their own selection for study. For any of the above pamphlets, or for samples or lists of others, write to:

THE LIGUORIAN PAMPHLET OFFICE

Liguori, Missouri

